"SOWING THE WIND," A THRILLING SERIAL STORY BEGINS NEXT WEEK

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FIGHTING A RED FOE;
OR, EARLY DAYS IN THE WILDERNESS.
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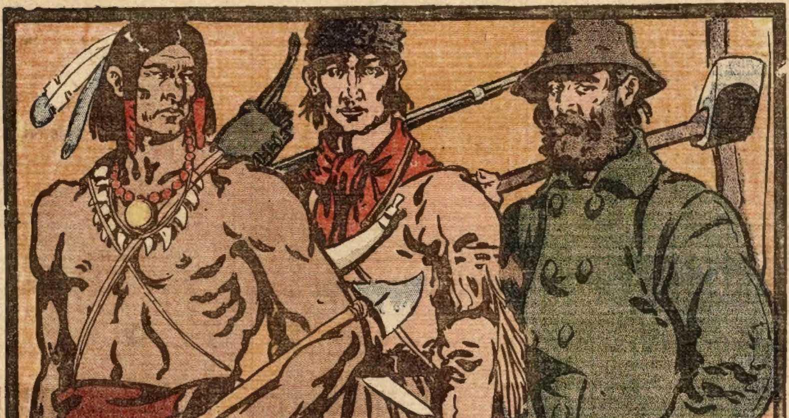

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CHAPTER I.

SIMON KENTON REPORTS DANGER.

"I reckon thar's not much danger o' the varmints sendin' me under, on my way into the fort; but I saved my life once by takin' care along this very way, so I'll not be too fast. I don't think any o' the varmints are in the neighborhood o' the fort yit, though."

Thus mused a young pioneer ranger who stood in the forest, near Boonesborough, Kentucky, one afternoon early in the summer of 1777. His figure was tall and well-proportioned and he stood very erect. He was carelessly but comfortably dressed in the garb peculiar to the time and locality. In his hunting-shirt, and deerskin leggins with fringes at the seams, he was a picturesque figure. His coonskin cap saf becomingly upon his dark auburn locks. His countenance was one expressive of a man of firmness and energy, and also of a frank and generous nature. His gray eyes were alert, and his quick ear was trained to catch the slightest disturbance among the underbrush. He carried a powder-horn and bullet-pouch and was armed with a long flint-lock rifle and hunting-knife. He was none other than Simon Kenton, then known as Simon Butler, afterward so famous as a skillful woodsman and Indian scout and the hero of many thrilling experiences with the red men. This man, so instrumental in winning tne wilderness west of the Alleghanies from the barbarous Indians and in making possible the advance of civilization that turned the hunting grounds of the aborigines into peaceful homes and flourishing fields, made his advent into the wilderness at the age of sixteen. Disappointed in love, and believing that he had killed his successful rival, William Veach, in Virginia, he had fled to the West. Thus exiled from home, he struggled with the dangers and privations of a wandering life in the forest, under an assumed name, until, previous to the time which we write, he had been appointed as a spy by Daniel Boone, the leader of the settlers at the Boonesborough fort, which had been built two years before.

The young ranger was about to begin reconnoitering the ground with the care for which he was usually noted, before attempting to enter the fort, when a slight noise in front of him attracted his attention. He stepped behind a tree and waited. Some one was approaching the spot where he stood. Was it friend or foe? It might be a straggling Indian playing the spy, or it might be a hunter from the fort. Most likely it was the latter. But with rifle ready for use, should the approaching person prove to be an enemy, Kenton stood motionless. The person who had excited his fears soon came into view. He was recognized as John Moore, a hunter from the fort. After uttering a low whistle to make his presence known, Kenton stepped from cover and joined the other, who greeted him warmly.

John Moore, or Jack, as he was commonly called, was perhaps younger than Kenton, being little over twenty years of age. But he possessed a frame wonderfully developed in strength and activity. He was tall and handsome and every line of his face bespoke intelligence and integrity. In addition to his natural gifts, he possessed an education superior to that of most young men of his time. He was armed and dressed like Kenton, except that he wore more substantial shoes than the moccasin-like affairs that encased the feet of the other, and his attire in general showed more taste for dress. Few of the pioneers gave any attention to the conventionalities of dress. Their habiliments were designed for service and comfort.

Jack Moore had left his home in Virginia more than two years before. The cause of his seeking the wilderness was a love affair, as in Simon Kenton's case. But, unlike Kenton, he was not burdened by the belief that he had committed a crime. He had fallen in love with Helen Martin, the daughter of Harvey Martin, a Virginian. Jack had believed that his affection was reciprocated, and the course of true love had seemed to run smooth until one day he asked the hand of the young lady in marriage. She declined to answer at once. Jack should have been satisfied to have given her time to consider a question of such vast importance to them both. But he insisted upon receiving an answer. A playful refusal was the result.

Alas! How easily do we commit seemingly insignificant errors that often lead to painful misunderstandings and even to grief and unhappiness! And love is blind, not only to the shortcomings of the being upon whom it is lavished, but very often to other things as well.

Jack Moore had one deplorable fault. He possessed an irritable temper. What can temporarily rob a man more completely of his reason than a temper that is out of leash? When Helen Martin teasingly refused Jack, a quarrel ensued. Rashly declaring his intention of going into the wilderness, Jack angrily left the young lady's presence.

"Come back; I will explain. I was only in fun," Helen called after him.

But the angry lover either did not understand or did not heed.

"I am tired of being trifled with. Goodby!" he said, and was gone.

"He will come back, surely," Helen said to herself; "he surely knows that I was not in earnest."

But Jack stubbornly carried out his avowed intention of entering the wilds. After a wandering existence of more than a year, he found his way to the new station at Boonesborough. The wilderness seemed to be suitable as a place in which to bury his unhappiness and forget Helen. But still, after his anger had left him, while wandering through the forest aisles, often in danger of meeting death at the hands of the lurking savage, he realized that he had acted harshly and unwisely with the gentle being whom he loved. He believed as strongly as ever that she loved him. But he would not yet return to her, acknowledge his fault and ask her forgiveness.

Although each kept his story to himself, a strong friendship had grown up between Simon Kenton and Jack Moore. After their greeting in the forest near the fort, Jack inquired:

"Where have you been, Simon?"

"Hangin' round the deserted stations an' spyin' along the Ohio," Kenton replied in that soft, pleasant voice that might have been cause for envy on the part of many a man of culture.

"Are thar any signs of red varmints round the fort?" he continued.

"Not that I know of," Jack replied.

"Thar soon will be," the other declared, and the two entered the fort.

For the benefit of those readers who are not familiar with the early history of Kentucky, a brief sketch and description of the Boonesborough fort may not be out of place here. It was founded about two years before the opening of our story. Dunmore's War, in which the combined Indian tribes were worsted, had just ended. The fort was the first real foothold gained by the pioneers in the Kentucky wilderness, although other stations soon began to multiply. The fort stood near the south bank of the Kentucky River, in the central part of Kentucky. It was in the form of a parallelogram. Its length was more than two hundred and fifty feet and its width about one hundred and fifty feet. The strong log cabins along the four sides were connected by pickets, or slabs sharpened at one end and driven into the ground. On the side facing the river was a strong gate, and a similar one was on the opposite side. The doors and windows of the cabins faced the interior, or court, of the inclosure. These cabins were built for protection and use, and were bullet-proof. This fort afforded considerable security from the attacks of the red men, but even within its walls the pioneers were obliged to be clad with caution. The fort did not alleviate the insecurity of the lonely cabins that were connected with it only by faint trails through the forest, except as a place of refuge for their inmates.

No Indians lived in the surrounding country, but the wilderness was greatly valued by the Shawanoes, who lived to the northward, and other tribes as a hunting ground. Although the region had been given up by treaty, these fierce tribes would resist every attempt of the pioneers to establish settlements to their utmost.

Soon after entering the fort, Simon Kenton and Jack Moore found themselves in the presence of Daniel Boone, perhaps the most famous of Kentucky pioneers.

"Well, Simon," said the great ranger, "you've been gone a long time; did you l'arn anything new?"

"Yes; the Injuns are goin' to give us trouble ag'in. Thar's several of 'em already on this side of the Ohio,' was the reply.

"They've been a-givin' us a plenty of bother, but I reckon we needn't look for nothin' else for a long time."

"Yes; hit seems to me the country grows powerful slow."

"The Injun trouble is the cause; but a few families come in now an' then."

"We'll not have many men to hold the fort ef the Injuns attack us, will we?"

"About twenty'll be all, 'thout we git help, an' t'other stations'll have to take care o' theirselves."

"I met a man north of here who said he an' some others had built cabins lately back to the east. I told him of the danger of the varmints comin'. They may try to jine us."

"So thar is danger of trouble from the redskins right away, is thar?"

"The varmints are sartinly comin' south. They may be here 'most any time."

"We must be ready for 'em. Did you spy on any of the Injun villages?"

"Yes; the varmints are gettin' ready to start on the warpath in earnest. They have been holdin' councils, shootin' matches an' the like. They've been throwin' the tomahawk an' runnin' races. You know what sich work means. Thar is danger, 'thout a doubt."

"We'll be on the lookout; you boys will help wi' the spyin' an' I'll do what I can," said Boone to Kenton and his friend, and thus the interview was ended. The attention of the garrison was needed to put the fort in readiness for a siege.

Simon Kenton, the sagacious Indian scout, had made no mistake when he reported that there was imminent danger of an Indian incursion. The savages were determined to resist to the last the encroachments of the settlers upon the land that had so long been their hunting ground. They were actuated by a feeling that was akin to the patriotism that incites us today when our country is in danger. The red man entertained no higher ideal of happiness than to roam over a happy hunting ground. Imagine, if you can, the feeling with which he saw the pioneers taking possession of the fairest hunting land he had ever known, and you will think of the poor untutored son of the forest as a creature to be pitied rather than to be condemned. His relentless cruelty and disregard for treaties was the result of despair in striving to resist a superior race. But civilization was to take the place of barbarism. Like the Moors of Granada, the Indians were compelled to give way before the irresistible advance of an equally brave, more energetic and more enlightened people.

We offsprings of peace of today are unable to realize fully the dangers, privations, trials and sufferings that the early pioneers had to undergo. They had to contend not only against the ferocious animals, but also against the crafty and merciless aboriginal warriors.

The frontiersman could enjoy no hours of ease. The Indian attack might come at any time. This state of insecurity demanded constant alertness. So, in wresting that wilderness from the savages, strong wills, brave hearts, and resourceful minds were necessary. And instead of wearing coats of mail, the settlers were wont to be clad with caution.

CHAPTER II.

THE CALL OF A TURKEY.

"Listen, d'ye hear that?"

The sentence fell from the lips of Simon Kenton as he and Jack Moore stood in the forest, a considerable distance northeast of Boonesborough, on the day following the arrival of the former at the fort, as recorded in the preceding chapter.

"Yes; it sounds like the call of a wild turkey," Jack replied.

"That's right; hit sounds like a turkey's 'kyouk,' but hit's not made by a turkey."

"It may be, and again it may not."

"Hit's made by a sneakin' Injun spy."

"There it is again."

"Yeah; hit's a good imitation, but hit's not got the natural ring. Thar's a jar in hit."

As the two young rangers listened in the shade of the green-clad forest trees, the sound that had called their attention was repeated again.

"That's bound to be a varmint," said Kenton. While an ordinary listener would have felt no suspicion upon hearing such a sound, the acute hearing of the experienced woodsman was quick to detect the imitation from the real.

As the two scouts continued to listen, a sound very like the first reached their ears again.

"That's nearer than the first sound," remarked Jack.

"Hit wa'n't made by the varmint that made t'others," said the other.

"There may be several Indians not far away."

"They'll answer by the same kind o' signals, then."

Kenton was right. Before many minutes had elapsed, a clever signal rang through the forest aisles again. It was answered promptly from different parts of the forest.

"Turkeys don't seem to be sca'ce," observed Kenton.

"And I'm hungry for turkey," replied Jack, with a smile indicative of the fact that he was not ignorant of the real state of affairs and the probability that they would have to deal with Indians.

"Them signals mean somethin'," Kenton declared.

"Hadn't we better try to find out what that something is?" said the other.

"I reckon so. S'pose we try to git sight o' one o' the featherless fowls."

To this Jack agreed and the two young hunters moved cautiously through the trees, peering eagerly forward, with rifles ready for use in case of danger. They moved a little apart, following nearly parallel lines. Both were well versed in woodcraft, for young men. The task which they had set before themselves was a delicate one. But they had reason to believe that several Indians were not far away, and they wished to learn how well-grounded was their belief. They employed their greatest skill; but after an investigation of perhaps half an hour they met at a point where the emerald expanse of the forest was broken and a clear stream ran lazily through the glade, reflecting the beauty of the summer sky. They refreshed themselves with the cool water and sat down for a consultation.

"Thar's no further sign o' varmints, so we may 'a' been mistaken," said Kenton; "but I'd 'a' swore them noises wuz made by redskins."

"So you're of the opinion that we only heard turkeys after all, are you?" said Jack.

"Not exactly; but we'll soon know. Dan'l has sent out some more spies, an' ef thar's any varmints around, somebody will l'arn o' hit."

"We needn't give up the search yet."

"No; but the sounds we heard may not 'a' been made by Injuns. We could 'a' been mistaken."

"But I don't think we have been mistaken, Simon."

"I don't know; we've not seen e'er a varmint."

"And we haven't seen any turkeys. The sounds we heard were made either by Indians or turkeys."

"You're right, Jack. The Injuns are sly as they can be. They'd be apter to keep out o' sight than turkeys; the thing for us to do is to keep out o' sight, too."

"And wait until we find out which uttered the sounds we heard?"

"That's hit, Jack, an'——"

"Hush!"

Again the clever imitation of the call of a wild turkey reached the ears of the two scouts. It came from a point not far distant and was repeated five times in quick succession.

"That varmint has failed to l'arn his business; he's not any o' the ones 'at tried hit before," said Kenton.

Before Jack could reply, other signals rang out, coming from various directions.

"That settles the question we wanted to decide, Simon; the Indians are all around us," was the comment.

"We had better try to git to the fort. As I said, them signals mean somethin'. The Injuns may be plannin' to attack the fort," said Kenton.

The sun was considerably past the zenith when the two rangers separated. They moved thus apart in order to spy out more of the land than was possible if both went together. Clad with caution, each moved toward the fort.

Under the same circumstances there might have been a desire on the part of some Indian fighters to dislodge one of the nearest warriors, regardless of consequences. But it was not so with the two wary woodsmen. They knew that the wiser course would be to go as expeditiously as possible to the fort. It was necessary to move with great care until the immediate vicinity of the fort was reached. They must move with cat-like tread and with their senses alert in order to avoid being detected by the vigilant savages. They could not admire the picturesque scenery: the trunk of a tree or a clump of bushes might conceal a lurking enemy.

Jack Moore had proceeded only a short distance when the whip-like report of a rifle rang out and a bullet whined spitefully and dangerously near him. A chance move on his part had destroyed the aim of the hostile red man who had fired the shot, and saved his life. Jack instinctively glanced in the direction whence the shot came and his quick eye caught a glimpse of an enemy peering from behind a tree. To bring his gun to the front and fire was the work of an instant. But the bullet passed harmlessly by the warrior's head. The cunning brave, by the clever artifice of exposing and withdrawing his head, had drawn Jack's fire. The latter was about to spring to cover in order to reload his gun. But before doing so he glanced quickly around to see whether any other Indians were within rifle range. Accident helps a man in many instances, but it is safer by far to exercise proper caution and make due application of good sense than to depend upon chance. Why are we possessors of God-given faculties if we are not to use them?

As Jack glanced around him he saw a rifle in the hands of a second Indian, raised and pointed at him, scarcely thirty yards away. A few quick bounds brought him to a point where he was not visible to either of his cunning adversaries. His gun was soon reloaded and he looked about again for the crafty braves. One of them had made a detour and was again in view. Jack was discovered at about the same time that he discovered the Indian. Both presented their guns. But Jack proved to be the quicker shot, and an instant later he believed that he had only one enemy to contend against, at least for a short period of time.

The other hostile had not been idle. His gun was reloaded and he was now near Jack with his gun leveled at him. The young hunter realized that his position was desperate. Before he could make a move for self-preservation a report broke the stillness of the forest. To his great surprise, Jack neither heard a leaden messenger whining through the air nor felt its dull sting in his flesh. He glanced toward the spot where the Indian had stood. The warrior lay upon the ground pierced by a bullet.

"That must be Simon's work," Jack said to himself, "but I didn't think he would be here; he went farther toward the south."

"Hello, sah," said a voice, and, looking in the direction from which it came, Jack saw a burly negro approaching the spot where he stood.

The Ethiopian was clad in the habiliments usually worn by the wilderness rangers. He carried a long flint-lock rifle and a long knife hung in a kind of scabbard at his side. He was apparently little over twenty years of age. His ebon countenance beamed with pleasant good humor.

"I reckon yo finks I let dat debil hab it at de right time," remarked the negro.

"It was certainly none too soon," replied the young scout, grateful for his deliverance. "But how did you happen to be here?" he continued.

"Dat's plain as de daylight; I's here because I hab come," was the waggish reply.

"Where did you come from, then?"

"From back in de woods."

"What is your name?"

"I ans'ers to Mose; dat's all de name I need."

"You have saved my life; it would be slight reward to thank you. Some time I may be able to repay you."

"Howsumeber, I's a friend ob de white man, fo' I's a black white-man myself."

"My name is Jack Moore. I shall be glad to hear your account of how you came here, when we have found a safer place."

"Does yo' fink dar's mo' Injuns not fur off?"

"Yes. I wonder what is to be done next?"

CHAPTER III.

A PERILOUS SITUATION.

As Jack ceased speaking a sharp musical sound that might have been mistaken for the call of a native wild bird came from a point not far distant. Jack answered it by a similar call.

"Who am dat?" inquired Jack's new acquaintance.

"Simon Butler, a friend of mine," replied the young ranger, referring to Kenton, who, it will be remembered, was known by the assumed name of Butler.

Kenton soon emerged from the bushes with his usual guarded movement. He was as much surprised at sight of Mose as Jack had been at the appearance of that individual. Addressing Jack he inquired:

"You've had a fight wi' the varmints, ha'n't you?"

Jack related briefly what had happened.

"Well, you ort to be thankful that this feller happened along," said Kenton. "I am. An' to show that we are thankful we must not stand here an' talk. Hit's too risky."

"Yes, the Indians may be looking for us now."

"I's ready fo' dem," said Mose, as he finished reloading his gun.

The three hastily concealed the bodies of the fallen savages, who were Shawanoes, in the leaves, for it seemed too barbarous to leave them as they had fallen. Then, after reconnoitering for a short time, they found a place where they would be comparatively secure from observation should any of the hostiles pass in the immediate vicinity.

They had scarcely reached this place of concealment when a savage uttered a signal to the eastward, and a second one uttered the imitation of a wild turkey's call not far to the westward.

"The varmints are goin' toward the east as ef they didn't intend to tackle the fort," said Kenton in a voice barely audible to the others.

"How do you know? Did you see any of them?" asked Jack in a voice equally as guarded.

"I seed several of 'em goin' since I left you; they've got some devilment in view—keep still."

An instant later three Shawano warriors passed within a short distance of their hiding place. But the Shawanoes did not discover them. Mose made a movement as if to raise his gun, but Kenton checked him by a gesture. The good-natured African submitted readily to the will of the young ranger, who impressed him at first sight by his masterly manner as being a man of superior judgment and skill.

The savages soon disappeared in the forest.

"They seem to be rather excited," Jack remarked.

"I 'low they're lookin' to find out 'bout that shootin'," said Kenton, "but they're goin' to jine t'others to do some devilment."

"Maybe dey's goin' to tackle de folks I leabed a while ago," said Mose.

"What folks, an' where'd you leave 'em?" was Kenton's inquiry.

"Tell us about it," said Jack.

"Massa an' Missis an' some oder folks—an' me wid 'em—hab been way back in de woods at a cabin Massa built," Mose begun. "De rest ob us hab not been dar over a month, but Massa built de cabin two or free months ago.

"De place would hab been a bad place to fight de Injuns in—Massa's been finkin' dat dey goin' to be debilsome—an' a man tol' him yisterday dat dar wus danger. So we all started to fin' a fort.

"Dat's how I come to leab de oders; I wuz huntin' to fin' de fort—Massa say dar's one not bery fur away. But I couldn't fin' hit, an' I hear a turkey, but I couldn't git to see hit. I wuz tryin' to git sight ob hit when I diskibered you an' dem Injuns in a fight."

"One of the Indians made the sound that you thought was made by a turkey," said Jack.

"Dat's de way ob hit, I reckon. Where's de fort?"

"About two miles to the southwest of here."

"Great snakes! Dat's furder'n I 'lowed."

"It may be farther than that," said Jack, a little dubious concerning his former estimate.

"Where did you leave your folks?" asked Kenton.

"Back in de woods 'bout four miles from here, I reckon; as I habn't had hit measured I can't tell fo' a fac'. Hit's a debil ob a long way."

"How many are there of them?"

"Dar's nine men an' free women."

"What is your master's name?"

"Martin."

"He must be the man I told o' the danger from Injuns, yesterday," said Kenton to Jack. Addressing Mose he continued:

"In what direction did you leave your folks?"

"Hit must 'a' been back dat way," said the darkey, pointing in an easterly direction.

"That explains the actions o' the varmints. They've found out that your folks are open to attack an' are already gittin' ready to wipe 'em out o' creation," was Kenton's significant opinion.

"How many Indians do you think are in the immediate neighborhood?" was Jack's inquiry.

"That's hard to tell," Kenton replied. "I think thar's ten or more, at least, an' thar may be anywhere from that to fifty."

"Snakes alibe!" ejaculated Mose. "I's got to do somefin' to let de folks know de danger dey are in."

Mose was very intelligent for one of his race, the people of which have been for ages "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for their more fortunate brethren. He possessed many amusing peculiarities. Among the eccentricities of his speech was the use of the expressions, "Great snakes!" and "Snakes alibe!" for "Great sakes!" and "Sakes alive!"

"What were your folks doing when you left them?" Jack asked of Mose.

"Dey wuz comin' dis way, but dey takin' deir time, till some ob us fin's de fort. An' den de women folks wuz gittin' tired."

"We must do what we can to save them from the Indians," said Jack. "What do you say, Simon?"

"We must let them folks know thar's danger, an' then we must try to help 'em, of course," said Simon.

"Can you lead the way back, the way you have come, and meet your folks?" Jack inquired of Mose.

"Reckon I can foller my back-track," said the African.

"Well, Jack," said Simon, "you'd better go wi'—what's your name?"

"Mose."

"Well, Jack, you'd better go wi' Mose an' tell his folks o' their danger, as fur as we know; an' I'll try to l'arn what the varmints are fixin' to do, an' jine you."

"If I meet the folks I'd better lead the way right toward the fort, hadn't I?"

"Don't be in too big a hurry to git started, till you hear from me. Waste time, somehow—or gain hit, I mean."

"Do you think the Indians are going to prepare a trap for the settlers to walk into?"

"Yes; they mean to do devilment an', of course, they'll try some cunnin' plan."

The rangers parted, Mose accompanying Jack. Kenton moved off in as guarded and cautious a manner as possible, while Jack's motions were scarcely less stealthy. But Mose trudged along in a careless way that was quite annoying to his companion. When Jack requested him to employ greater caution he said:

"Obscuse me, sah. I's doin' about de best I knows how; I's puttin' one foot befo' de oder, an' so on. Dese big feet am boun' to make some noise, in spite ob de man in de moon."

Jack was convinced that further remonstrance would be useless, so he moved on in silence. But the words of the Ethiopian belied his ability, for he showed a greater degree of caution in his subsequent movements.

Jack knew that the fugitive pioneers were in imminent danger of becoming victims to the cruelty of the savages. With the spirit of the Golden Rule he determined to do all in his power to help his fellow beings to avoid the impending blow and to extricate themselves from their perilous situation.

CHAPTER IV.

BOONE AND KENTON CONSULT.

Jack and Mose proceeded in an easterly direction, while Kenton moved farther to the north. No Indian warrior ever moved more silently than did Kenton. The intrepid ranger was truly and completely clad with caution. It was necessary that he should be thus prepared for any sudden and unexpected turn of events, for he was about to set out upon one of the boldest ventures of his remarkable career. He knew that the cunning Shawanoes, whose intentions he meant to learn, also were wont to be clad with caution.

"I shouldn't wonder if Dan'l is not fur from right here," he muttered to himself after he had gone a considerable distance. Kenton was almost as well versed in the lore of the forest as was Daniel Boone, who, perhaps, had no superior as a master of woodcraft. The accuracy and skill with which these pioneers interpreted the "signs" attests their powers of mind. Had their energies been turned into other channels the result would have been gratifying. But while their powers to deal with the arts of civilization were undeveloped, they were masters in the line along which they were trained. The woodsman's art required very acute powers of reasoning and judgment, as well as habits of very close observation.

So, while a man who was ignorant of the mystery and contrivance of Kenton's art would, under the circumstances, have been wholly in ignorance of such a thing, the ranger was almost certain that his friend was in the immediate vicinity.

Kenton listened intently for a short time, after which he said to himself:

"Dan'l wuz at the fort when we left, but he's not thar now. That wuz one o' his signals, an' no mistake."

A musical call, faint and uncertain on account of the distance from which it came, yet of sufficient distinctness to be recognized, had reached his ears.

An instant later Kenton uttered a similar sound, after which he again advanced, varying his course in order to meet the individual who had uttered the signal and who he was confident was none other than Daniel Boone. A few other signals, that could not have caused any passing Shawanoe to entertain suspicion, were exchanged. After a brief period Boone's stalwart figure appeared in front of the other and, selecting a place where they would be sheltered from observation, the two sat down for a consultation.

"Well, Simon, have you been able to find out anything?" inquired the elder.

"Yes; I've l'arned a few things an' I'm expectin' to l'arn more," was the reply; "what have you found out, or are you jist from the fort?"

"I'm jist from the fort, but I saw an Injun a little while ago goin' toward the east."

"Thar's several of 'em in the woods not fur away, an' thar's some white folks to the east, on their way to our fort. The varmints must be fixin' an ambuscade for 'em; they've been signalin' an' gatherin'."

"Where are the white folks, and' where did they come from?"

"They're back toward the east two or three miles, I reckon. They're the folks o' the man I warned yesterday."

"How many of 'em are thar, an' about how many Injuns are near here?"

To this Kenton replied as fully as he was able, at the same time keeping on the alert, as did Boone, for any sign of the approach of an enemy.

"We must do all we can to help the folks," said the elder ranger, "an' ef they git to the fort safe, they may be of some help to us. We must do all we can for 'em, anyway."

"What do you think is the best plan to foller?" queried Kenton.

"The first thing to do is to find out what the Injuns are up to; then we can decide what is the best thing to do next."

"Did you bring any of the men with you from the fort?"

"Two of 'em are in hearin'."

"Ef we had enough of 'em——"

"Thar's not enough men at the fort to risk the chances in an open fight. Besides, more depends upon management than anything else."

"The varmints are not apt to attack the fort, are they?"

"Not till after they're through with them folks. But hit's the nature of the redskins to try a surprise."

"Hit's goin' to take some of the carefulest sort o' work to save them settlers from the varmints."

"Do they know the danger they are in?"

"Not exactly; they're expectin' trouble, I reckon, but not as soon as hit's goin' to come."

"You say they're comin' this way; then don't you think they're apt to fall into the hands of the Injuns before we can find out enough to prepare a plan to save 'em?"

"Jack is on his way already with the darkey who told us about the folks, to find 'em an' keep 'em from comin' right on."

DR. SHOOP'S

Rheumatic Cure

Costs Nothing If It Fails.

Any honest person who suffers from Rheumatism is welcome to this offer. For years I searched everywhere to find a specific for Rheumatism. For nearly 20 years I worked to this end. At last, in Germany, my search was rewarded. I found a costly chemical that did not disappoint me as other Rheumatic prescriptions had disappointed physicians everywhere.

I do not mean that Dr. Shoop's Rheumatic Cure can turn bony joints into flesh again. That is impossible. But it will drive from the blood the poison that causes pain and swelling, and then that is the end of Rheumatism. I know this so well that I will furnish for a full month my Rheumatic Cure on trial. I cannot cure all cases within a month. It would be unreasonable to expect that. But most cases will yield within 30 days. This trial treatment will convince you that Dr. Shoop's Rheumatic Cure is a power against Rheumatism—a potent force against disease, that is irresistible.

My offer is made to convince you of my faith. My faith is but the outcome of experience—of actual knowledge. I KNOW what it can do. And I know this so well that I will furnish my remedy on trial. Simply write me a postal for my book on Rheumatism. I will then arrange with a druggist in your vicinity so that you can secure six bottles of Dr. Shoop's Rheumatic Cure to make the test. You may take it a full month on trial. If it succeeds, the cost to you is $5.50. If it fails, the loss is mine and mine alone. It will be left entirely to you. I mean that exactly. If you say the trial is not satisfactory I don't expect a penny from you.

I have no samples. Any mere sample that can affect chronic Rheumatism must be drugged to the verge of danger. I use no such drugs, for it is dangerous to take them. You must get the disease out of the blood. My remedy does that even in the most difficult, obstinate cases. It has cured the oldest cases that I ever met, and in all of my experience, in all of my 2,000 tests, I never found another remedy that would cure one chronic case in ten.

Write me and I will send you the book. Try my remedy for a month, for it can't harm you anyway. If it fails the loss is mine.

Address Dr. Shoop, Box 502, Racine, Wis.

Mild cases not chronic are often cured by one or two bottles. At all druggists.

"But Jack may fall into the hands of the Injuns before he finds the settlers, or he may fail to find 'em."

"Ef the varmints meddle with Jack an' that darkey thar'll be shootin', an' we'll hear hit."

"They may git too fur away."

"No danger; the Injuns are not out of hearin' of a gun from here, an' ef we hear any shootin' one of us can go an' meet them folks."

"An' ef we don't hear any shootin'——"

"Then we can depend on Jack an' that darkey to find the settlers."

"Well, Simon, that all sounds well enough. What do you think the Injuns are goin' to do?"

"They're fixin' to let their victims walk into a trap, or somethin' of that sort."

"Very likely."

"Have you any further plan for us to foller, ef that's so?"

"You've just done some good plannin', Simon; why don't you keep on yourself?"

"The hardest an' most important part is still to be planned, Dan'l; that's where you come in."

Kenton naturally appealed to the wisdom of Boone, whose coolness and deliberation were of inestimable value in a time of such peril. Extreme discretion and unerring skill were absolutely necesasry in order that the danger that threatened the fugitive settlers, who were seeking a place of safety, might be averted, or, rather, escaped. At any rate, the elder ranger, as leader of the settlers in his vicinity, was to be consulted first in regard to so delicate a matter.

Daniel Boone never wasted time in despondency. He always met disaster cheerfully, and hopefully continued his efforts. Unlike Kenton and many other pioneers, he did not get into occasional panic and act rashly and impetuously. Replying to Kenton he said:

"I'll help you to find out exactly what plan the Injuns are goin' to try, an' then we can decide what's the best way to outwit 'em."

"My opinion is that they'll wait in ambush, an' ef they do the folks must make hit appear that they're goin' to walk into the trap an' be cotch like a fly in a spider's web."

"But," said Kenton, "ef they pretend 'at they're goin' to do that, what else can they do after they go so fur?"

"I don't know, yet; we'll have to think out what to do then. Now, Simon, we must not let the redskins know we are in this matter, or hit will not be half so easy to fool 'em."

"We'd better be goin', hadn't we?"

"Yes, I reckon we had. We can understand one another ef any signalin' is needed."

Each of the rangers carefully examined his gun. A little later they disappeared in the forest, each going alone.

CHAPTER V.

IN SEARCH OF THE SETTLERS.

When Jack and Mose set out to find the fugitive settlers, the former was fully cognizant of the fact that the task before them was a difficult one. To warn the fleeing pioneers without allowing the Shawanoe warriors to discover his presence and hence grow suspicious, seemed almost impossible to Jack. To make a blunder might serve only to hasten the destruction of those he would save. Therefore it was necessary that in every movement he should be clad with caution, or he could not promise himself that success would crown his efforts.

And then he was a stranger, he believed, to those whom he was seeking, even his presence being wholly unknown to them. His perplexity continued to increase until a new thought entered his mind.

In his brief planning he had left Mose entirely out of consideration. The black youth could rejoin his friends and the hostiles would think little or nothing of it. Mose could inform the settlers that Jack was in the immediate vicinity and he could quietly join them. Thus, perhaps, no suspicion that the young hunter was other than a member of the original party would enter the mind of any lurking Indian spy.

But it would be a task of no little difficulty to find the party of fugitives unless Mose was a far better woodsman than was apparent.

"Did you agree with your folks upon any signal?" Jack asked in an undertone.

"Nuffin' in 'ticular," Mose replied, "but I can make 'em understand dat I's not bery fur off."

"How?"

"Dey'd know my whistle in Ol' Afriker or in de moon."

"I don't think it will be wise to whistle."

"Well, den, dar's no use ob whistlin'; I can lead de way right to de folks."

"Lead on, then, and make as little noise as possible," said Jack.

For an hour, perhaps, they tramped forward, employing the sagging, stealthy gait common to woodsmen. Mose seemed to have lost nearly all his awkwardness and natural indifference to caution. His consciousness of the peril that threatened his friends seemed to have called forth latent energies and to have stimulated his powers. With bent knee and chest stooped forward, he moved almost as silently as his more skillful companion. Luckily, they had not encountered a single Indian brave.

"I'm so dry dat I could drink a whole spring ob watah," Mose declared when they paused at length and listened.

"We may be able to find some water, but I doubt whether we can find your friends. We may have passed them; we must have tramped two miles, at least."

"Dey can't be bery fur from here," Mose commented. "I'm gwine to try a signal an' den I'll hab to hab a drink."

And before Jack could remonstrate the dusky youth uttered a long, peculiar whistle that varied through different degrees of pitch, changing from moderate to low and then to high in rapid succession.

"How does yo' like dat?" asked the darkey, and his teeth and eyes showed in striking contrast to his ebon skin.

"Hush!" commanded Jack, as the negro was about to utter a second whistle. The warning was useless. A second whistle, louder than the first and executed in the darkey's own way, rang out through the forest arches.

"You'll have all the Indians in this region after us if you don't do better than that," said Jack reprovingly.

"I neber finked."

"You must think," said Jack testily.

"Well, ef you'll obscuse me fo' dat, I'll do as yo' say," said Mose humbly and apologetically. "S'pose we hunt dat drink now."

The frown that had clouded Jack's brow was forced to give way for a smile. The dejected and woe-begone expression upon the ebon countenance of his companion was so ludicrous that his angry mood passed quickly. He was ready to forgive the indiscretion when Mose promised to be more careful. But the individuality af the negro soon reasserted itself.

"We had better go on a little further," said Jack; "that whistle may draw some of our enemies to this spot and, besides, this appears to be a bad place to look for water."

They advanced accordingly.

"One ob us can watch fo' de enemy an' de oder can look fo' a spring," was the remark of Mose when they again halted.

"Well, hurry up and find the water and I'll be on the lookout for enemies. We can't afford to lose much time," was Jack's reply.

The two moved forward a short distance and the negro soon discovered a spring of clear, cold water in a small hollow.

"He'p yo'se'f," he said to Jack. Having refreshed himself, Jack was soon moving guardedly through the forest again.

He was congratulating himself upon the stealth with which Mose was following him, when it occurred to him that the negro was not following at all, or, at any rate, not folowing immediately in his footsteps. Mose had started at his heels after drinking.

The young ranger turned to look for the negro. Between him and the point where they had found the spring was a small area of comparatively open ground. Upon each side the forest was very dense, the spaces between the large forest trees being filled with a miscellaneous growth of saplings. Jack had a good view of the ground back to the spring.

The tall figure of the Ethiopian was visible near the spring. Evidently his thirst had not been sufficiently slaked and he had returned for a second draught of the refreshing water. Jack saw him lay his gun carefully on the ground a few feet from the spring, walk to the spring, prostrate himself at full length and drink.

He had risen and Jack gesticulated, hoping to call his attention and cause him to waste no time in rejoining him. But at the same instant a sharp report rang out and Mose, after making a frantic movement as if to run, sank to the ground in a heap and lay motionless.

Jack knew that the shot was fired by a cunning red warrior, and he grasped his rifle to avenge the negro, for whom he had taken a strong liking despite the seeming recklessness and disregard of proper caution on the part of the black youth.

But Jack's desire for vengeance was of no avail. No sooner had he set out to discover the location of the warrior who fired the cowardly shot than he was led to believe that a second enemy was in his rear.

Seeing that his colored friend showed no signs of life, and despairing of being able to aid him, the young pioneer, moved noiselessly into the dense growth to the east. The thought did not occur to him until later that the lurking Shawanoe might attempt to scalp his victim.

Jack now realized, since he was deprived of any assistance that Mose might have given him, that he must continue the search for the settlers alone. The undertaking was full of danger and difficulty, but he was determined to do his best.

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY.

Jack proceeded only a short distance before halting to ascertain, if possible, whether he was being followed. He heard nothing to excite his fears, so he moved on again. He continued his course until a sound caught his ear that arrested his movements. He listened intently, but could hear nothing.

Had he been mistaken, or was it a human voice that he had heard? He was almost certain that he had heard a voice, and he believed that it had come from the southward. He set out in that direction, determined to investigate. Perhaps he had heard the voice of one of the settlers for whom he was searching.

He moved quickly forward, yet he did not forget his caution. At brief periods he halted and listened. But after a time he decided that it would be useless to proceed along the course that he was pursuing. If he had heard a voice it had not come from a distance greater than he had already covered. He heard nothing further to indicate that any one was near.

Jack knew that it would be useless to signal to those whom he sought. He reasoned that, should they be sufficiently near to hear, they would not understand any signal that would not be understood by the vigilant warriors, several of whom might be in hearing distance. In fact, he did not doubt that the Shawanoes were scattered through various parts of the forest. He conjectured that the hostiles were spying singly. He believed that others were not far from the spot where one had given good evidence of his presence so recently.

Jack listened again, but no sound rewarded him.

He now realized more fully than before the great difficulty that was attached to the task that he had set before himself. To find the fugitives with no definite knowledge of their whereabouts was an undertaking that it might require hours of patient and skillful effort to accomplish.

The brave young man was almost ready to despair of success.

Perhaps Mose had been mistaken in leading the way back. Even if the negro had made no mistake, during the absence of that individual his friends had changed their location considerably at least. Perhaps they had gone to the northward or southward, and thus passed him. Mose might have wandered away from his companions of his own accord, and they might believe that he had been captured by the savages, or, as Jack did not doubt, that he had fallen a victim to an Indian's bullet. If such was the case, they would have given little consideration to Mose in making maneuvers for their own safety, except that one of the party might leave the others to search for him.

But Jack now thought of his object in searching for the settlers. In all probability they were ignorant of the presence of savages. Hence, he should leave the hostiles out of his reasonings in regard to the whereabouts of the settlers.

He also concluded that his reasonings, however good they might be, were in themselves alone as useless in the accomplishment of his undertaking as water remaining in a stream is useless in extinguishing a blaze. Action was what would be required, or, rather, reasoning rightly applied and set to work.

Jack was almost ready to give up his quest. But accident or a watchful Providence sometimes clears the way out of a seemingly hopeless difficulty. Such was the case with Jack. He had turned and was retracing his steps when he heard voices a short distance ahead. No one was visible, but the voices seemed to come from a trail that he had crossed soon after varying his course to the southward a short time previous.

This trail had existed for an indefinite period, perhaps for decades or even centuries. It had been made by the buffalo and other wild animals of the region. Perchance many a Shawanoe hunter had traversed it in his search of game. Upon each side of this primitive path extended a veritable wall of emerald.

Jack peered eagerly forward. He soon reached a point in the thicket that afforded a good view of the trail, the trend of which was nearly east and west. In the trail a number of persons were proceeding slowly westward. It took but a glance for Jack to determine that they were the settlers whom he sought.

He was gazing at them wondering in what way it would be wisest for him to make his presence known, when he started convulsively. Then he stood as if rooted to the spot, forgetting that "discretion is the better part of valor."

Could he believe his senses, or was it an hallucination? Surely he must be mistaken! But no; that face could be none other than that of Helen Martin, his quondam sweetheart and the being whom he still loved.

This young lady, at sight of whom Jack was so greatly moved, was a vision of loveliness. Her coarse homespun dress could not hide the symmetry of her figure. Her head was uncovered, revealing a profusion of dark brown hair. Her face was that of a siren; her expression, that of a Madonna. Jack was not only a helpless captive to her charme; he was ready to be her slave. At the thought of her danger he was deeply agitated. His thoughts flitted over the past, and he wondered how he could have become angry with her. With Helen he recognized her parents and her four brothers.

Under the influence of surprise and emotion, Jack forgot that which should have claimed his closest attention and drifted into a state of bewilderment. Thus, in a kind of lethargic condition, he allowed that to occur which he would have been most careful to guard against but for the spell of wonderment into which he had fallen. In his case, as in many others, the thing that was least expected and for which he was least prepared was the thing that happened.

Jack was upon the point of moving forward to join the settlers, when a highly improbable thing occurred.

"I'll move on ahead and step into the trail in front of them," he said to himself.

But as he was about to make a movement to carry his intentions into effect he felt himself violently seized from the rear by two pairs of strong arms and dragged back toward the deeper shades of the forest.

"Long-knife no make noise; me kill," said a voice at his ear.

His first impulse was to struggle against his two savage captors to the last. But a tomahawk was raised menacingly above his head and he realized that to do so would be to hasten his destruction. He could not be more completely in the power of the two warriors than he was already. He resolved to watch his chances of escape. Submitting to the will of the two braves, he allowed himself to be led away from the spot.

Bitterly now did Jack regret that he had neglected to guard against danger from the rear. But it is far easier to criticize an error when it is too late to mend it than it is to anticipate danger and always be prepared for it. His captors in their war-paint appeared to be anything but merciful.

Jack did not give himself up to utter despair. But hope, the only thing that did not escape from Pandora's box, was all that was left to him.

This highly graphic narrative of life in the days when to live was to struggle and face death will be continued in next week's Ledger. Every new subscriber is entitled to our cameras and patterns free. Please note our offer on pages thirteen and fifteen.

THE NEW YEAR.

Another new leaf? Yes, again 'tis the time
When we pause 'mid the pleasures of feasting and rhyme
And listen, while conscience reminds us anew
Of the things that we ought and we oughtn't to do.

The many small voices which cause such expense
Must be banished for aye with a virtue intense;
And the greater ones, too, if there happens to be
Any left in the make-up of you or of me.

And yet, when I carefully look o'er the list
Of the earthly temptations which I must resist,
In candor I'm bound to confess it appears
Like the very same leaf I've been turning for years.

The Woman in Gray;

Or, The Crime of the Countess Hansfeldt.

By T. C. Harbaugh.

Begun in No. 50, Dec. 19. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IX.

WHAT MISS GRACE SAW.

I would like to digress here, with the reader's permission, and narrate a few incidents that came under Grace Baskerdale's observation the night of the crime at Riverview.

I need not give them in the girl's own words as she related them to me, but will give the gist of them as they bear on this strange story of mystery.

Grace was a clear-headed, discerning girl of twenty-one, with a mind of her own, and not easily frightened. She had the true Baskerdale discernment, coupled to strong will, and I could always rely on her statements.

It was past midnight on that fatal date and the girl had sat up reading a novel which had just been thrown on the market and was enjoying a great deal of popularity. She did not note flight of time, so absorbing was the volume, and when at last she finished the last page she started to note the hands of the clock on her mantel.

She arose and was about to prepare for bed when she heard a footstep in the outer hall.

Going to the door she opened it slightly and peered down the corridor. Directly ahead was the portal of the octagon room which in all her life she had never entered, considering it wholly belonging to her father. True, she had never exactly been forbidden its precincts, but, honoring her parent, she had never asked the privilege of inspecting its interior.

As she stood at the door of her own chamber, the portal of the octagon room opened just a little and she saw a man there. She drew back instinctively, for that man was not her father. The light from behind him fell on a part of his face and she saw that it was the visage of a stranger, a man with well-built shoulders and a darkish beard over much of his face.

Her first thought was that her father had an important visitor from the city, but why should he be there at that hour? In a few moments the face was withdrawn and then a woman came in sight, looking up and down the hall with the eyes of a cat. This was stranger still to the young girl and she was looking cautiously at the woman when she, too, vanished back in the octagon room and the door closed.

Grace went back to the little bedroom and for a moment stood there speechless and almost without nerves. Something told her that a terrible deed was being enacted in the round chamber, and it so preyed on her mind that she could not sleep.

Suddenly a noise like the falling of a heavy body greeted her ears and she sprang to the door. Throwing it open she looked down the corridor, but saw nothing; everything was still again.

Half an hour passed, the old house still remained as quiet as death, and Grace Baskerdale did not retire.

When an hour had slipped into the past she crept from her chamber and toward the door of the octagon chamber.

She reached the door and found it unlocked.

A very dim light was to be seen over the transom, and she hesitated. She did not want to disturb her father if he were still there, but something told her to turn the knob and investigate.

This the girl did, and the portal yielded.

The first thing that caught her eye was the figure of her father in his arm-chair near the desk. He was leaning back in the chair and the light fell over his face, strangely dark to her.

Grace glided forward; she made no noise as she pushed her body across the room. There hung over all the silence of death caused by the hand of crime.

All at once she stopped and almost let a cry of horror slip from her throat.

It took but a glance to tell her that her father was dead.

Over the floor at his feet lay some papers, his hands were tightly clenched, as if in a dying agony, and there was blood at the corners of his mouth.

Then she thought of the two faces she had seen at the door of the octagon room.

It was not strange that she should associate them with the death of her father and for some moments she stood there breathless and unnerved.

What to do she hardly knew.

Her first impulse was to rouse Miss Felix, but, as she had no liking for that creature, she did not do this, but made her way back to her own room.

She was about to close the door behind her when she again heard footsteps in the hall, then a struggle, and upon looking out she saw some one carrying a body from Miss Payson's room.

The girl then wondered why she had not thought of the housekeeper, who was her friend, but it was too late now.

The man with his inanimate burden went down the stairs to the door below and was gone.

Grace waited a while longer and then crept to Miss Payson's room.

It was empty! The bed had been tumbled, but I—the housekeeper—was missing.

Horror gradually crept over the young girl and took full possession of her. She seemed about to faint and at last, unable to withstand the strain longer, she fell across her couch. It was daylight when she came out of the swoon, the light was shining in at the window, and for a while she sat up trying to recall the events of the night. She felt that death, murder, still tenanted the octagon room, that her father was still in the arm-chair where she had left him, and that the daylight was falling on the face she loved.

She felt that she must see again for herself, so, stealing from her room, she moved toward the octagon room when she met Felix in the corridor.

"You're an early bird," said the tall tigress of Riverview.

Grace looked into the woman's face and thought she detected a gleam of victory there. She had long known that Baskerdale did not like the woman whom he called his half-sister, and that the mild lislike was returned with compound interest.

"I am going to father's room," said Grace. "Did you hear anything last night, Felix?"

"Nothing unusual."

"I did. There is death in there, I am sure," and the girl pointed to the door of the round chamber.

"In there? Nonsense!" cried Felix. "But we'll see, girl."

They reached the door and Felix laid her hand on the knob.

"Why, it is unlocked!' she exclaimed, and they entered, the tall woman ahead.

The next moment Felix had halted in front of the horrid figure in the arm-chair, but not a gleam of sympathy came into her eyes.

"It is murder!" said Grace.

"It looks like it," coldly said the woman. "I heard the noise. I must have heard the death struggle."

"Where were you?" and the flashing eyes of Felix fell with all their baleful light upon Baskerdale's daughter.

"I was in my room."

"In bed?"

"No; I was up reading. I had just closed the book and when I went to the door I saw a man standing in yonder door."

Felix laughed.

"A man? What nonsense!" she cried. "If murder has been done this is no man's work. I came past Payson's door just now and the room is empty. The murderess has fled!"

Grace Baskerdale started and, drawing back, looked squarely into the face before her.

"You don't accuse Miss Payson of this?" she cried. "What could have been Harriet Payson's motive?"

"Don't you know? That woman is in the pay of a clique. I always thought so. She is gone. Say, tell me, if you can, why she isn't in the house at this hour?"

Grace Baskerdale did not reply.

CHAPTER X.

THE LIVING EYE.

I need not say that the proposition made to me by the Woman in Gray startled me beyond measure. It was terrible in its very coolness, and the idea that I should go out and rob Jared Joyce, the old detective, of the papers I had already risked so much to obtain sent a repulsive thrill through my brain.

Yet I knew that the woman meant every word she said. I knew, too, that I was, for the time being, in her power, and the threat with which she had coupled her proposition was the very acme of gall. Of course I did not know who was within call of her voice, did not know who might be just beyond the door behind me. Perhaps the man who had brought me to the house, the man whom I thought must be Captain Howett, was lurking there like a tiger ready to spring forward and seize me in his clutches.

When I retreated from the Woman in Gray, crying, "Never, never, never!" I felt my blood rush to the remotest recesses of my body, and again I resolved to face her to the last moment in utter defiance.

She seemed to think that I was wholly in her hands, that there was not the slightest chance of my liberation, and that I would finally yield and become her tool.

"So you grow defiant, Miss?" she said in her insinuating tone.

"I have answered you."

"Have a care. I have intimated where you are—in the very shadow of the noose."

"Pushed there by your hands if, indeed, I am there," said I. "I refuse for a moment to entertain the base proposition you have made."

"You delivered those papers to Jared Joyce?"

"Yes; I promised Hugo Baskerdale to do so."

"What was Baskerdale to you?"

"My friend and employer."

"Nothing else?"

"Nothing else. I never saw him till I answered his advertisement for a housekeeper."

"And got into trouble, eh?"

"Through the machinations of his enemies—yes."

She seemed to change color at this and came toward me with the silken tread of a tigress.

"Why don't you go after the papers yourself?" I suddenly asked.

"Because I do not choose to."

"Then why not send Captain Howett?"

I spoke this name at a venture and saw that it startled her.

"What do you know about Captain Howett?" she asked.

"More than you think. I know that he is in the conspiracy, that he is the person who took me from the sidewalk and brought me to this house, at your instigation, of course."

"You give me credit for a good many things," she said.

"Among others, for this," and I leaned forward and showed her the slit in my sleeve which I got in the arbor at Riverview when I encountered some one there with a knife.

"You think I did that, do you?"

"I know it," I said firmly. "A little more and it would have been a human heart."

She did not reply to this, but seemed to look beyond me at something on the wall.

"Come—answer me finally!" she suddenly said.

"I have spoken my ultimatum."

"You will not get the papers?"

"I will not."

"Very well. Good-night, Miss Payson. If you change your mind please rap on the door."

She glided back, opened the door, and in a moment was gone and I was again the sole occupant of the room.

For some minutes I stood there thinking over the events of the past few hours. I wondered if Jared Joyce had discovered my absence and what he would think of it when he did so. Would he couple Captain Howett and the Woman in Gray with it, or would he thing that I had slipped away of my own accord?

The last thought was not a pleasant one for me, as I did not want the old detective to think I had deserted him after giving my promise not to do so.

But here I was in the hands of the conspirators, and especially in those of the Woman in Gray, the mysterious person who once before had laid hands upon me.

When she had taken her departure I looked around the room like a captive bird that takes in her cage, but I could see no avenue of escape.

I was in a prison luxuriously furnished, but secure all the same. So far as escape was concerned it might as well have been a prison with adamantine walls. A soft light fell around the room from a globe overhead and books lay on the table, with a piano in one corner. But I had just then no taste for music or literature. What I wanted and craved was freedom, to get beyond the walls of that room and to tell Jared Joyce what had transpired.

At last, tired of surveying the confines of my prison, I went over to a sofa and reclined upon its soft cushion. As I did so my eye happened to fall upon a portrait on the wall opposite. It was the face of Wagner, the composer, as large as life, and strangely my gaze became riveted upon it.

There was nothing striking in the face above what I had already seen in his portraits, but suddenly it seemed to me that the eyes were real.

The more I looked at them the firmer became this conviction and I settled down to the belief that I was being watched by some one on the other side of the picture.

This discovery was not very pleasant and when I arose and approached the portrait the human eyes seemed to vanish.

Who was behind the painting? Surely, some one on the watch. Captain Howett or the Woman in Gray? Really, it mattered little since I was watched by some one, and the surveillance lessened my chances of escape.

But I determined that I would not be thus watched without a vigorous protest and, knowing that the revolver which, at Jared Joyce's suggestion, I had concealed on my person, was ready for use, I crossed the room to a spot close to the sofa, and, wheeling suddenly, covered the "Wagner" and fired.

The ball tore a little hole just above the lips; it was a chance shot, for I did not pretend to be a markswoman; but the report was followed by a stifled cry which seemed to come from behind the portrait and I sprang up still holding the smoking weapon in my hand.

I was not bothered again by the watchful eyes, and, going over to another part of the chamber, I sat down and collected my few scattered senses.

The night I knew was now well advanced and I longed for day, hoping that it would bring some relief to the strain I was undergoing. I counted the moments as long as I could, but at last yielded to overtaxed nature and fell asleep.

When I awoke I found the light out and a streak of sunlight falling on the figured carpet.

In an instant I was on my feet and, springing to the door, which was my first impulse, I was about to grasp the knob, when the portal opened in my face and Clarice, the Woman in Gray, stood before me.

Her appearance was so sudden as to throw me back a step, but suddenly, as my strength and eagerness rushed over me, I leaped upon her and, catching her in my arms, turned her half-way round and pushed her headlong into the room I had just left.

"There!" I cried. "Try your own prison for a while. And don't forget that your 'Wagner' has a wounded face. Good-morning, Miss Demon," and with this I slammed the door and turned the key in the lock, which she had left there.

It did not take me a moment to reach the front door of the house.

I almost fancied I heard the tiger feet of Captain Howett at my heels, and a moment later I had wrenched open the portal and was out in the sunlight with the roar and bustle of the great city around me.

Free once more! Now for vengeance!

CHAPTER XI.

THE BRAND OF GUILT.

I reached the house of Jared Joyce just when he was in a state of great perturbation about my absence.

The old detective had discovered that I was not in the house and shrewdly suspected that my womanish curiosity had got the better of me and that I had given him the slip; but when I narrated my adventure he quietly removed the stump of his cigar from his mouth and gave me a curious look.

"Seems to me," said he, "that your running away was the best thing, after all. It shows that the conspirators are still at work and are on the lookout. This Captain Howett is a dangerous man and we will have to look after him a little. I have some news for you," and the old man leaned back in his chair and took some papers from an inner pocket.

"I have been looking over the documents you recovered from Riverview," he resumed. "They are quite interesting and throw some light on the antecedents of the Woman in Gray."

"That is good!" I exclaimed. "I am sure she is a woman with a past."

"Yes; and one that is not as bright as a blazing star in mid-heaven," smiled the old detective. "If you will listen to me, Miss Payson, I will tell you a litle story."

Eager to listen to anything about this mysterious woman, I settled back in my seat and prepared for the story.

"Years ago Hugo Baskerdale lost his wife," began Jared Joyce. "The girl, Grace, was the sole issue of that marriage, and her mother died when she was quite small. Baskerdale resolved to remain unmarried the rest of his life, but quite unexpectedly he fell into the snares of a charmer. He made a journey to Europe and there met the Countess Hansfeldt, or a woman who at least called herself that.

"She found that Baskerdale was well rated and immediately set her cap for him. The courtship did not last very long, nor the honeymoon, either, for that matter. The couple were married in Paris and started off on a tour of the continent. They got as far as Berlin when something very extraordinary occurred. This was nothing more nor less than the arrest of the Countess on the charge of robbery and blackmail.

"Baskerdale would have fought for his wife if he had not discovered by the most convincing evidence that she was undoubtedly guilty. He had this evidence thrust upon him in such a manner that, overwhelmed with shame and indignation, he gave the woman up to the authorities and she received a sentence commensurate with her crimes. She turned out to be a mere adventuress, had married three men before she saw Baskerdale, and two of them, driven to the depths of shame by the discovery of her doings, had committed suicide."

"What an impostor!" I cried.

"She went to prison, and Baskerdale, resolving to keep secret his marital failure, came home. He kept the secret well and tried to forget it. He plunged into money-making in the city, bought Riverview, and saw his child develop into a beautiful woman without suspecting that she had a stepmother who was serving time in a foreign prison. The clouds might have remained from Baskerdale's sky if he had not learned by accident that his wife had been released from custody and was again plying her old trade.

"He feared that she would turn up in America, and from that day he became a haunted man. A year or so ago his stepsister, Miss Felix, the woman whom you call a lean and hungry tigress, Miss Payson, accused him of having married in Europe, and from that time his troubles increased. She was afraid that Grace would get all her father's wealth, for Baskerdale confesses that he never liked Felix, saying in these papers that she never had a drop of Baskerdale blood in her veins.

"One day, not long ago, a woman entered his private office in this city and Baskerdale nearly fell off his chair when he looked into the face of his foreign wife. He would not have anything to do with her. He offered her money if she would go away and leave him at peace, but she told him that she wanted all or nothing. She said she intended to impoverish Grace, besides disgracing the young girl, and this nearly drove Baskerdale insane. He forthwith made a will in which he gave Grace all he had and cut out the adventuress entirely. Miss Felix got an inkling of what he had done and allied herself with the adventuress who came at intervals to Riverview and made Baskerdale's life miserable.

"Well, matters went along thus for nearly a year. By and by the old man, fearing bodily injury at the hands of the exacting fury whom he had married, wrote out a full confession of his folly, and I have it here before me. This is what you have brought me, Miss Payson. In these papers is the story of Baskerdale's marriage and sufferings, and he wanted me, in case he died violently, to bring home the crime to the right parties. This is just what I am going to do," and the old man resumed his cigar and folded the papers which he had laid open on the table.

"Baskerdale was strangled in the octagon room," he went on, after a brief pause. "He was killed the night you were adducted and brought to this city. Now, what have I done personally?"

I looked at the old detective curiously.

There was just the semblance of a smile at the corners of his mouth and I waited eagerly for the next words.

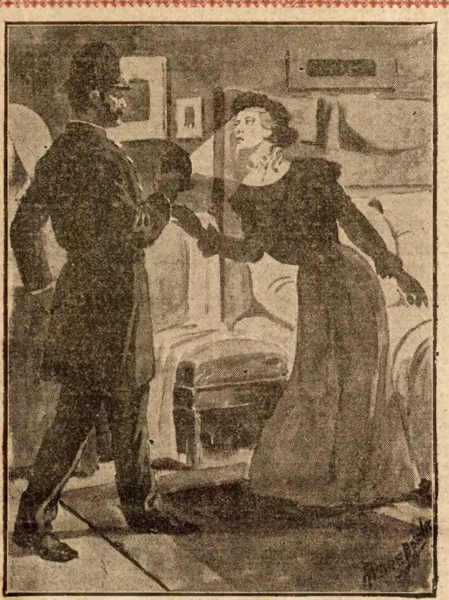
"I have discovered that this Captain Howett, who lives at 333 Gaylord street, has a deep hand in this dark puzzle. I know that he is well acquainted with the Woman in Gray, who is the bogus Countess Hansfeldt. I know that they met in Europe, for, as I may as well tell you, I have been through the Captain's trunk."

"At his house?"

"Nowhere else. While he does not keep much that is incriminating about him, nevertheless he has a little of that nature there—enough for my purpose. Captain Howett is no less a person than the Countess' husband."

'Whom she married without getting a divorce from Hugo Baskerdale?"

"What cared she for such a little thing as that?" smiled the old detective. "No wonder the Woman in Gray wanted those papers which she must have suspected were in existence. No doubt she and Miss Felix were about to destroy them when you pounced upon them at Riverview, and, at the muzzle of the revolver, took them away. You came upon them in the nick of time. With these papers in their pockets don't you see that she would set herself up as Baskerdale's widow and claim nearly everything in sight? The world would never know that she is Captain Howett's wife, and, with Baskerdale's riches, they could quit the country and live in style abroad. But I'll balk this pretty game if I can. I'll show the trio that it takes more than three people to rob a young girl and feather their own nest."



"Not a word, Miss!"

Jared Joyce walked to the window, where he stood for a moment and then came slowly back to me.

"They're desperate," said he. "Clarice of Hansfeldt will stop at nothing. I want to find out who strangled Hugo Baskerdale, and then I'll straighten the coil. You must make yourself a little scarce from now on, Miss Payson. If you fall again into the hands of this set of vipers your life won't be worth that!" and the old man snapped his long fingers.

I promised to take his advice, for I had no desire to again fall into the deadly net of the three spiders.

"I'm gathering up the clews one by one," continued Mr. Joyce. "God willing, I'll have them all in time, and then——"

There was a ring at the lower door and the detective left the room.

Presently I heard two people coming upstairs and the man re-entered accompanied by Herbert Stinson.

The face of the young man was as white as sail-cloth, and the moment he entered the room he seized Jared Joyce's arm and cried out:

"Grace has disappeared!"

I sprang forward with a wild cry:

"It is true," said Herbert. "She cannot be found high nor low."

CHAPTER XII.

ONCE MORE IN THE TOILS.

While I was startled by the terrible announcement made by Herbert Stinson, I was not much surprised, for I was ready to believe anything after what I had passed through myself.

I thought that the fair young girl was in danger while she remained at Riverview watched by the lean, hungry tigress there, as I was accustomed to call Felix, and I at once associated her disappearance with this dangerous woman.

Herbert Stinson stated that he had just come from the country place and that Miss Grace had vanished the night before. Her disappearance did not seem to grieve Miss Felix much, he said, and no wonder, for the girl stood in her way. He had hunted for Grace as well as he could during his brief stay at the place, but not the slightest clew could he pick up.

During this time the face of Jared Joyce, the old detective, was a study.

I watched him closely while Herbert told his story, and when the young man finished old Jared looked up and for another moment was silent.

"We'll find her, never mind, Mr. Stinson," said he, kindly, but with firmness.

"Thank God for that assurance!" cried the lover. "You think she is alive, then?"

"We will hope so, at any rate."

"One of the other servants said he heard her in her room at 10 o'clock, but that is the latest information I could pick up."

Ten minutes later I was again alone with Jared Joyce.

"We will now go back to our conversation, Miss Payson," said he. "Mr. Stinson interrupted us a little. I was saying, I believe, that you must be on the lookout. You remember that the Woman in Gray in the depot that night denounced you as a crazy person, her own sister, and that you narrowly escaped being taken to the madhouse."

I shuddered as I told him that that terrible incident was still fresh in my mind.

"That policeman may be still looking for you," he went on. "Should he see you he will undoubtedly clap hands on your person and give you a ride you do not c[illegible] to have."

"I understand."

"I am going out now. Let no one in this house while I'm out. No matter who comes see that they stay on the outside."

"I'll obey. You'll be gone——"

"Maybe until tomorrow. We'll untangle this business in time, I think," and, picking up his hat and the stump of the cigar, Jared Joyce left me quite alone in his lodgings.

After my late experiences I did not have the curiosity to go out as I had before.

The day passed in a commonplace way. I heard the rattle of trade and business on the street and looked out between the curtains several times, that was all.

The detective did not come back, and night again came round. I read a while until I grew sleepy, and at last went to my room.

How long I slept I do not know when I was roused by some one in the room.

Slipping out of bed, I was in the act of getting into my garments when the full glare of a dark lantern shone in my face. Almost blinded by the light, I fell back with a cry and made out the dim figure of a man behind the light.

"Not a word, Miss," said a raspy voice, which I did not recognize. "A still tongue is the best friend a woman has, and you'll do well to cultivate that friend's acquaintance. You will put on your clothes and come with me."

"With you?" I cried.

"Oh, yes; I'm a policeman, and we've been looking for you for some days."

Then like a flash everything seemed to pass before my mind. I was arrested at last. Arrested for the murder of Hugo Baskerdale; but when I thought of it I really smiled, for I felt that I could prove my innocence.

The man before me wore a policeman's uniform and was a tall, broad-shouldered fellow, but I could not fairly see his face.

"Where are you going to take me?" I asked.

"Where do we generally take accused people?"

'I am accused, then?"

"Of the murder of Hugo Baskerdale."

"But I am innocent——"

"That's for the courts to determine," he said, with a laugh. "I am simply doing my duty. Come along. Really, I have no time to waste in this house."

"If you will wait till Mr. Joyce comes back——"

"Now, that would be clever, wouldn't it?" he grinned. "Just think of it, me waiting here till he comes back to tell me, no doubt, that you are innocent! No, Miss; I know nothing but duty."

Seeing that I could extract no time from this man, I dressed as rapidly as possible, hoping all the time that Jared Joyce would come back, and when I had put on my hat I said:

"I'll just leave a note for Mr. Joyce, telling him what has happened."

"That's not necessary; he'll find it out soon enough," was the reply.

The next moment a hand was laid on my arm and I was conducted downstairs and out into the street.

During all this time I noticed that the man kept his face turned from me as much as possible. Time and again I tried to get a good look at it, but every time I was disappointed, and when I ventured to question him he turned me off with a grunting answer which I did not fully catch.

We walked rapidly for several squares, when my escort said:

"It's a pretty long walk for a lady, so I'll just call a cab," and, suiting action to his words, he hailed a passing cab and bundled me into it.

I noticed that the vehicle moved into a part of the city which did not seem to be the prominent quarter, and when it stopped I looked out and saw a row of commonplace houses.

"Here we are," said the man.

As I alighted I looked at my surroundings.

"This is not the police station," I said, drawing back.

"It is just as good," was the reply, as the cab moved on. "Come, you will be seen by the Chief at his residence. That is better than the public office."

I was hurried up the steps and into one of the houses, the hand of the man all the time at my arm.

Something told me that I had again been trapped, and at the threshold I drew back almost at the length of his arm.

"Walk in, Miss. The Chief will see you at once," he said, pushing me forward, and in another moment the door had closed behind us.

I was ushered into a small room alongside a narrow corridor, and in a moment the man turned on the gas.

Then, for the first time, I had a fair look at his face.

A wild cry that must have been heard beyond that room fell from my lips.

I fell back as I uttered it, and with a grin of victory on his face, standing directly in the blaze of the light, I beheld the same man who had captured me before when I came from the restaurant near the detective's house—Captain Howett, known now to me as the husband of the Woman in Gray.

Truly, I had fallen into a bad nest. I was once more in the toils, and as I looked at the man he laughed aloud.

"The scheme worked—eh, Miss? You will hardly see the Chief of Police tonight. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. That is a folding-bed over there. Let me bid you good-night."

"Coward! Fiend! Murderer!" I cried, but he only laughed again and vanished, locking the door after him.

This strange story of love and mystery will be continued in next week's Ledger, leading the reader to some very dramatic and remarkable situations. Every subscriber is entitled to our free comeras and patterns as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

JOE'S NUGGET.

BY ARTHUR L. MESERVE.

I had been about three months at Tear-Shirt Camp when the thing happened which I am going to tell you of.

All of us had only middling luck. None of the party had made a big strike in the way of finding nuggets. Still we had nothing to complain of. We were making fair wages, and that, in the long run, is better than making a big haul at one time, and then laying off and running through the whole of it in less than a month's time, as I have known plenty of fellows to do.

One day the camp was all astir like a hive of bees which somebody had thrown a rock into. One of our chaps, a fellow by the name of Joe Garland, had made a ten-strike. He had hit upon the biggest nugget of gold that had ever been found in the region of Tear-Shirt. It was a good one, worth a couple of thousand at least, and the boys all gathered about it with greedy eyes. They envied Joe his good luck; still they were all glad that he had got it. A more delighted fellow than he was you never saw. He hugged the chunk and petted it, and it seemed that he would never tire of feasting his eyes upon it.

After the first excitement was over Joe was left to his treasure, and the boys turned to digging again, each one hoping that he might soon be as fortunate as Joe had been.

Joe had half a mind to set off for 'Frisco with his treasure at once. The express only ran once a week, and it lacked three days of the time of going again. He was afraid that in some way he might lose the nugget before it was got to a place of safety. Still, I don't think that there was in the camp a person of whom he was suspicious. It would have been hard to have picked out a fellow who was not called all right.

Joe carried his nugget to the camp, but he would not stow it away with the rest of the treasure. He would hide it for himself. If the rest was stolen while he was away at work, he was going to save his.

Two or three times a day Joe would leave his work and go and see that the nugget was safe. We used to tease him about it, and tell him he was losing flesh at the rate of ten pounds a day, and that if the treasure was not sent away soon, there would be nothing left of him but skin and bones.

The third day after the finding of the treasure, about the middle of the forenoon, Joe made one of these visits to the camp. He was gone but a little time, and when he came back, a more frightened and woebegone-looking countenance than his you never saw in your life.

"What is it?" we all cried, in chorus, as he came dashing in among us.

"It's gone!" was all the poor fellow could manage to say.

"What is gone?" we repeated, though on the mind of each flashed the thought of the treasure.

"The nugget!" he gasped.

We dropped spade and pick and started for the camp. All of us were interested. If the nugget was stolen, most likely all the dust we had gathered had gone with it.

We piled into the camp, and went for the spot where the general treasure was kept. Each drew a breath of relief when we found that it had not been tampered with. The robber, whoever he was, had contented himself with Joe's nugget.

After we had satisfied ourselves with a look in the place where Joe had kept it, and thus convinced ourselves that it was really gone, we all turned to, to try and find a clew to the robber.

But, try as we would, not the slightest clew could we find. Not a track could we discover about the camp except those which we felt sure our own feet had made.

The fellow who did the cooking was the only one who had been about the camp since we had left in the morning, and nobody, much less Joe, suspected him, for he was Joe's brother.

It had been his custom to do up the work in the morning, and spend the rest of the forenoon with us until it was time for dinner.

He had not been at the diggings more than an hour before Joe had made the discovery of his loss, so that the robbery could have but just taken place.

All that day we spent in searching around but getting no clew. Whoever the robber was, he had covered his trail too well for us.

Night obliged us to give over the search, and the lost nugget was the last thing in our thoughts as one after another we dropped off to sleep.

I had been asleep some time, when some one gave me a nudge in my side, which completely woke me. I started up and dimly in the darkness I saw Joe's brother beside me.

"What do you want?" I said, a trifle annoyed, for I didn't relish the punch I had got. "Hush! Joe has just got up and gone out; and if he wasn't asleep when he went, then I miss my guess. He used to do such things when he was a boy. Let us follow him."

I sprang to my feet and we went softly out. A sudden thought flashed to my mind but I said nothing. It might be that the nugget would be found.

It was bright starlight outside, and we saw Joe moving away toward a cluster of oaks which stood about forty rods off. We followed after him as fast as we could, and got to the trees almost as soon as he did. At the foot of one he stopped and bent down, and pretty soon we saw him draw something forth. For a while he seemed to be fondling it, then he put it carefully back and turning around, he went by us toward the camp. He moved like one who had his eyes shut, and both of us would have taken our oath that he was fast asleep.

"The nugget is found," said I, in a whisper, and then we hurried to the tree. Its trunk was hollow, and thrusting in my hand I drew out the lost treasure.

We carried it back to the camp. When we got there no one was stirring. Joe was lying on his back fast asleep and all the rest were snoring in concert. We carefully put the nugget in the place where Joe had kept it, and then turned in ourselves.

In the morning we got Joe to show us the last place where he had seen his treasure. When his eyes fell upon the nugget a more astonished man you never saw in your life. Then, to the wondering crowd, we told the story of how we had found it.

ON THE BABY

Coffee Even the Babies Thrive On.

The little daughter of a College President was saved by the use of Postum Food Coffee at a time when she could not take any solid food.

Baby's aunt says: "My sister and her husband (who is President of a College in Georgia) visited me last Christmas and their little baby two months old was very sick. I thought it was not properly nourished so I began feeding it on Postum which I have used in my own home for years with such grand rsults.

"You would be surprised to know how that little thing improved. Sister had been feeding it on artificial food that did not agree with it. The baby continued to get stronger all the time we were feeding her on Postum and when sister left here she took Postum with her for she feels certain that with Postum to feed the baby on she is sure of good healthy nourishing food drink." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Postum is made of the purest cereals with absolutely no medication whatever and when boiled according to directions it is heavy with food value and a great nourisher and rebuilder as well as a delicious drink. It is also a specific for all of the dozens of different diseases caused by coffee. Trial proves this.

Look in each package for a copy of the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

Little Willie Knew Her.

Little Willie—"Who is that lady over there?"

Little Bob—"Ho! That ain't no lady, she's my sister!"

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Most writers who drop into poetry manage to drop clear through.

To attend to all his enemies Dowie will have to get a steam spanker.

Contentment comes to those only who want but little and are satisfied with less.

Can we safely go to war with Colombia since General Miles has been retired?

Herbert Spencer was one of the wisest men that ever lived, and he never married.

Eventually Professor Langley may bring the art of diving to a high state of perfection.

Don't think because a man is an expert mathematician that he always counts with the fair sex.

A girl has it in her power to make any number of men happy for life—by declining to marry them.

Mr. Bryan is learning French. If he acquires the accent, and it sticks to him—good-by, William!

President Roosevelt will not enter the Colorado fight. He has all the trouble he wants in Panama.

Every man expects to wake up some day and find himself famous. As a rule he does get as far as the waking-up part.

Russia is about to do several of the things that the Japanese say it must not do, just to see what will happen.

To avoid reflecting too severely on the Colombian statesmen's intelligence it must be assumed that they are bluffing.

A South Chicago man is to marry a girl he has never seen, but as she is from Indiana he knows that he cannot go wrong.

If it is true that Mr. Folk of St. Louis wrote that part of the message referring to boodlers he has no reason to be ashamed of the job.

To think that Mark Hanna was getting the credit for prosperity in Grand Rapids, when Lant K. Salisbury should have had the honor!

Mr. Roosevelt has taken his stand at the end of the alley and is prepared to put up the Wood appointment pin every time the senators bowl it down.

Missionaries propose to break up the habit of allowing women to be yoked with oxen in the Barbary states. Their condition would not be improved by yoking them to some of the men of the Barbary states.

THE LEPER'S FATE;

—OR,—

A TRAGEDY IN HIGH LIFE.

BY HELENA BALLARD WHITE.

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CHAPTER VII.

It took him some time to convince the two women that the child was harmless, and a longer one still to awaken their sympathies and interest. At last, understanding that they were to receive a large sum of money for their efforts in caring for and teaching the little unfortunate, they hastened to make friends with her, and Zoe took their petting good-naturedly.

The rheumatic father laughed at the absuridy of teaching her anything, but the younger sister, Malinda, declared that the child had intelligence if it were but awakened.

Feeling satisfied that she was in good hands, Justin, promising to call frequently, managed to slip away when Zoe's attention was attracted to the cat. He drove back to the mansion, thankful that his plans had succeeded so well. He was none too soon, for his uncle reached home only an hour after his arrival.

The doctor was somewhat surprised at his nephew's return, and after chiding him for running off in a fit of temper, extended a warm welcome. Justin observed that he was extremely nervous and repeatedly asked for Annette. After being told that she had gone to the hut to carry the colored woman some delicacies, he seemed a trifle relieved, yet he walked nervously about the room, listening to every sound. Although early, he soon ordered the carriage and left the house.

Driving at once to the hut, he expected to find his troublesome patient laid safely under the sod, and was much perplexed to see her so greatly improved. He found Annette laughing and talking gaily with the invalid and the old Mammy.

"The jade! I must look out for her," were his thoughts, as he turned toward her. "She will trick and expose me yet. This is my reward for playing benefactor to a slum beauty."

"Your services are required at the house, Annette," he said, authoritatively, and it took but little time for the frightened girl to fly along the path to Justin's protection.

"I am delighted to find you better, my dear," re said, turning to the invalid. "I suppose you took the medicine religiously that I left, and it has benefited you."

"Oh, yes; that is what has saved me, Doctor Ellis," said the woman, as she shot a sly glance toward Chloe. "I now have hopes of recovery. It must be some new remedy, Doctor."

The little physician looked puzzled, but undaunted, and said: "Yes, yes; it is a discovery of my own. If I have found a cure for leprosy, I shall be the wealthiest man on the globe. I have undoubtedly hit on a good thing."

"Ah! and is this true, Doctor?" said the woman, excitedly. "This explains my recovery."

"Certainly, my dear."

"And if I should leave off taking it, what then?"

"You will be in your grave inside of a week, that is all."

"You are positive, Doctor, that I am a leper?"

"Assuredly; why do you ask?" he said, looking quickly from one woman to the other.

"For no reason, only since I have been growing better I have foolishly hoped that you might be mistaken."

Filling a bottle with fresh medicine, Doctor Ellis left the hut, greatly mystified. Through some means the woman was improving. What could it be? He concluded that she was not taking the medicine as he had directed, or else her system was no longer affected by the drug. He must increase the dose and get her out of the way. He had fooled with her long enough. He greatly feared that she would discover the truth that she was not a leper. "Well, this last will finish her. I will give her two more hours to breathe," he murmured, as he whipped up his horse and hurried along.

"What is the matter? Why didn't the woman die?" he asked of Annette, as soon as she had been summoned to his presence.

"Why, I am not an M. D. Why should I know? She suddenly took a turn for the better, that is all I know about it. What a joke it would be after all should she recover and claim her fortune, Doctor Ellis?" said the maid, slyly.

"She might have some trouble in establishing her claim. She willed me her fortune in case of the child's death."

"But the child is not dead. It still lives."

"It is as good as dead," answered the doctor, sharply, irritated by the girl's manner more than her words. "No one but you could prove that the child lives."

Turning toward him, very calmly, she said: "No; no one save myself could prove the child's identity; you are right about that."

He studied her face for a moment, scarce knowing what meaning to give her words.

"There isn't any chance of your divulging this secret, Annette, since you are an accomplice."

The maid winced and shrugged her shoulder, without replying, and the doctor continued: "I often wish that I had taken your advice and disposed of the brat in its infancy. You were the wise one; I was the fool. The fact that my victims are on top of the ground has been a far greater worry than would the knowledge that my hand had put them under it."

"It would perhaps have been more merciful," said Annette, in a tantalizing manner.

"Oh, to perdition with your sentiment! That is not the point! I am thinking of the safest thing to have done."

"It isn't too late yet," said Annette, reading the doctor's mind, and desiring to know if she were right.

"That is the idea, Annette. Now you talk like the clever girl that you are. The woman, at least, must be gotten rid of. I see my fortune slipping away from me, Annette, and yours as well."

"You must have a strong vision to see mine. By comparison with your millions it is a mere speck."

"You have been well paid, so don't commence grumbling, Annette."

"Any one else would have demanded at least a third," the maid persisted.

Astounded at her boldness, the doctor started visibly, then controlling himself, answered calmly:

"This is too absurd to talk about!"

Anxious to learn if he really intended taking the woman's life, she said: "If I were as wise as yourself, Doctor Eldridge, I mean in your profession, I certainly should have rid myself of my skeleton, after being assured that leprosy would not do this for me."

"And so I determined to do, by a slow process. I supposed that she was done for the other night, since I kept her blood so well watered, and cannot understand the change."

"I think she has embraced Christian Science. That is what is curing her in all probability."

"Christian rot!" thundered the Doctor. "Does this explain it?"

"This is my belief. I think she is deceiving you in this. What is to be done, Doctor?"

"Don't bother; I have done it already. She won't be alive in the morning. I want you to hurry back and remain through the night and follow my instructions to the letter. Go at once, and when she is dead, bury her deep! Then come and tell me."

"I will do as you say, Doctor," said Annette, hurrying away to look for Justin. She found him in the library.

"The woman in the hut is in great danger, follow me at once, Mr. Justin," she whispered.

Arriving at the hut, Justin found that he was none too soon. The invalid, impressed with what the doctor had said to her about his new discovery, and believing that his medicine instead of Justin's had improved her condition, insisted on taking a dose of what he had left. Chloe objected, declaring that ten years with one doctor was enough, and she must take no more of his medicine.

"These young physicians know so little, Chloe. No doubt he stepped in just at the time that Doctor Ellis' medicine took effect and claimed that his own skill had been the means of saving me. I think I had better take some of it, Chloe; I am so anxious to grow strong. That which he left is a wonderful medicine."

"Sho' an' ole Chloe doan know what ter advise you, chile, only jes' my instinct tells me, yer best not take dat medicine."

"That is nothing to go by, Chloe, there, that's a dear, go fetch a fresh glass of water."

"Sho' now, an' you am dat persistent, honey, Chloe doan like ter have you take it; but I s'pose if it cain't do no good, it cain't do no hahm."

Just as she was putting the teaspoon to the sufferer's lips, Annette bounded into the room, and seizing the old Mammy's wrist, spilled the liquid on the bed clothes.

"Don't take it: it is poison!" she gasped.

It was amid great excitement that Justin stepped into the room a few moments later. Annette had saved him the trouble of explaining to the invalid that the doctor had deceived her in order to get possession of her money. He greatly feared this intelligence would be too much for the woman, and was surprised to see that she took the revelation so calmly.

"At times I have had my suspicions," she said, and have prayed God to put such unholy thoughts from my mind. Oh, what a fiend! and what fate!"

Taking Annette aside, Justin cautioned her to say nothing about the child for the present. Then he talked to the invalid at length, telling her that it was her policy to deceive the doctor. The story which Annette had invented of Christian Science would answer her needs for the present. For such reasons she could put aside his medicine."

Learning of this arrangement, Annette nerved herself for a stormy interview when she saw the doctor's carriage drive up toward evening, for she knew that he would be very angry to find his patient still among the living with a chance of recovery. At all costs, she was determined that he should not enter the sick room and distress the invalid. So placing the colored woman as guard over her charge, she locked the door between the two rooms and faced the doctor as he stepped in.

"Well, is it all over?" he asked, quietly.

"What do you mean?"

"Mean, why, I mean is she dead?"

"Oh, no, no; she is decidedly better this morning. Of course, she has not taken the medicine. She had quite decided to take no more."

"I can easily fix that with her," he said, angrily, as he stepped to the door of the invalid's room. Finding it locked he turned about and asked:

"What does this mean? Open the door at once!"

"I have got to obey instructions, Doctor Ellis. She vows that no doctor shall ever enter her presence again. I can do nothing with her. Here is a note which she requested me to hand to you."

"The devil!" said the little physician, as he scanned the page of notepaper. "She dispenses with my services as though I were some poor quack! She forgets that I hold her secret. I must remind her of it."

"But she is convinced through this new faith that she is not a leper."

I shall soon disabuse her mind of that foolishness! I shall call again in the morning; she will probably be over the absurd fancy by that time. And you, girl, see that through some means she takes the medicine. Tell her she will be sent to the colony at once if she disobeys my wishes."

"Be careful, Doctor Ellis; should you do this you will have to forfeit your millions. You had best not make this threat."

"Pshaw! you talk like a fool. Can she establish any claim? Mrs. Bourne, the wealthy widow, is dead, as all would testify; I could easily prove this woman an impostor."

"And what a sea of trouble you would make for us both. No; that will not do. You want to finish the job too quick. I will attend to the drops and see that she gets them in her broth every day," said the maid, who in this way hoped to gain time. "Give me two weeks to finish the job, or say a month. I shall promise not to bungle matters as you have done."

"You may be wise in this, Annette, and I suppose I might as well trust to your cleverness and keep away. Come to me in the morning at nine o'clock and report her condition."

Justin was pleased to learn that Annette had handled the doctor so skilfully, yet he was anxious to bring matters to an end before the child's disappearance from the dungeon was discovered. So, a few days later when he called and the invalid told him that she had been enabled to walk out into the sunshine, and held up her hand to the light that he might detect a faint tinge in it, he decided to tell her all. He led up to the subject, as he thought, very naturally.

"How long have you been troubled with this malady, Mrs. Bourne?" he asked.

"Since the birth of my child—that was ten years ago."

"Ten years? She would be quite a large girl by this time had she lived."

"Yes; and now that I am recovering, how I wish that she might have lived. What a comfort she would be."

Justin winced, then asked: "Of what did she die?"

"The scarlet fever."

"And after the death of the child, I believe Doctor Ellis came in for the entire fortune?"

"Yes; that was the agreement."

"Don't you think it rather an unwise thing to have done, Mrs. Bourne?"

"Perhaps so; but I was so grateful to know that he had kept me from the colony."

"It would have been a great temptation to most any man, my dear woman, to be placed in this position. A helpless infant alone in the world, standing between him and a vast fortune. It seems you have unlimited faith in mankind."

"You don't think, Doctor Holbrook, that your uncle would be guilty of such a crime?" gasped the woman at his side as she scrutinized his face.

"Some one's uncles have got to do these things. It is as likely to be mine as somebody's else. It is an easy matter to take a child's life, or say imprison it. Now, just suppose the doctor had taken it into his head to palm off some dead child for this little heiress under his charge, and imprisoned the latter to keep her from inheriting the fortune. Would such a revelation surprise you greatly? Is it not reasonable to think——"

Something in his tones rather than his words caused the woman to grow suspicious.

She sprang to her feet and gasped "What is it, tell me quick! You are keeping something from me! You don't mean—you are not telling me that such a thing is a fact?"

"There, do not become so excited, my dear woman! You see, if such a thing were true, you would need all your strength. You would have another to think of beside yourself. You——"

She cried out faintly, clasped her hands to her throbbing heart and said: "Oh, what is this all about? What does it all mean? I can endure it. Tell me, tell me, Mr. Justin, does my child still live, and is this her fate?"

"You have surmised the truth. But be calm. She is no longer imprisoned. I have rescued her. Just a few days ago I placed her with friends who are caring for her."

"Oh, thank God! my child lives—my child lives! I must see her! I must go to her at once. Dear God, how she has suffered! I shall avenge this horrible crime! I must get to him. I must kill, kill, kill—him. Do you hear? I must!"

"There, there, do not get so excited. It is a terrible ordeal, but compose yourself. Of course, you would be justified in shooting him through the heart, but——"

"Ah! I understand. It would be too merciful! Yes; you are right, and now there has come to my mind this moment, a better method of punishment. Oh! this revenge, this terrible thing that I have in mind! How sweet, how sweet it seems! I shall do it, yes, yes; I shall set about it at once!"

"And may I ask what you have in mind?"

"Ah, my friend, I cannot tell you. Do not ask this of me, and grant my prayer. I am the one he has wronged. I must be the one to avenge it! Leave this to me, Justin Holbrook, promise——"

"It shall be as you say, my dear woman, but I am anxious to see him handed over to justice."

"Listen to me. I shall punish this man in my own way, and the world shall never know. It were better so."

"I am mystified," said her companion.

"It will take a little time to accomplish my purpose, but in the end! Now, in the meantime, I must pretend to be in a failing condition. Annette will assist me in this. Oh, how strong I feel. This knowledge has put elixir in my veins—I am all strength, all purpose! But, tell me the details of this crime, my friend; I must learn all about it."

It came hard for the young man to describe the child's treatment and condition, and he was relieved when the story had been told. Even at that, he kept back much. The child was making such marked improvement, he concluded that for the present, it was unnecessary to tell her of its canine tricks. She had already been broken of the habit of barking, whining and snarling at strangers, so they told him at the farm house, and was becoming very mild in manner. He gave her to understand, however, that she had not the intelligence of an ordinary babe a year old.

She was greatly saddened and wept bitterly as he told the hideous story of the child's life. She was anxious to go to her, however, and made hasty preparations for departure.

"After all, she has a wonderful nerve," thought the young man, as he wtached her calmly drawing on her gloves. "I feared she would fall into a fit of hysterics at the recital. Her great anxiety to see the child has saved her from this, no doubt."

It took but a short time to drive to the poultry farm, all too short for the one, who wondered what effect it might have on a mother to find her child with such a blight on its life. To him, the whole thing was a very painful ordeal.

At last he found himself seated in the plain little parlor, which the two maiden ladies kept so scrupulously neat, with the woman sitting calmly in the large rocker, her eyes riveted on the door through which the child must enter. Over all the mingled sense of wrong and bitterness, there hovered a delicious motherly tenderness.

Soon the little unfortunate ambled in, holding tight to the hand of sister Amanda. She walked with great difficulty still, and threw her body heavily from side to side. She at once showed her joy at seeing Justin, and gurgled gleefully as he arose and went forward to meet her. He was very proud of the pretty child in its white pinafore and blue ribbons. He had not before seen her dressed so daintily, and in his eyes she looked a wonder.

"Oh, isn't she pretty, isn't she lovely!" said the mother, smiling through her tears. "She has still her father's look. My pretty babe, my sweet angel, come to your mother! How cruelly you have been wronged!"

As she reached out her arms, she was horrified to see the child draw away and bark furiously for a moment.

"Dear God, it is too much! My brain is going! Save me, save me! I am going mad!"

Justin quickly held a flask of brandy to the hysterical woman's lips. "Take a swallow of this; it will brace you. It is only occasionally that she does this. I supposed she was broken of the habit. See, she feels sorry for you, and wants to caress you; she seems to know that you are in distress."

As the child clasped its round white arms around the mother's neck and laid its warm, pink cheek against the bloodless one, the woman's eyes rained down the whole unuttered passion of her distress and sympathy. Zoe looked on wonderingly, while Justin walked to the window, and the two maiden ladies clasped hands and silently wept with the mother.

"Ah, my poor unfortunate, to think I should feel any repulsion, any horror—but I was unprepared. I did not know that it was so bad as this. In your mercy, my friend, you have kept much from me, no doubt. But I shall try to be brave and not mind. I am grateful for having a child. And she will learn; I shall take great pains——"

"Indeed, she is that quick," said sister Amanda, now drying her eyes and smoothing the child's silken brown hair fondly. "We are all very proud and fond of her. She is a remarkable child, and so says father."

At this, the rheumatic father, who stood in the doorway, came into the room and seemed to take great delight in relating the wonderfully clever things that the child surprised them all by doing, and soon all were laughing merrliy together, Zoe joining them as though she quite understood.

Suddenly plunging upon her knees before Justin, the mother looked into his face with a gaze full of rapturous delight and gratitude. Then she fell to fondling and caressing his hands, talking the while with feverish haste:

"Ah, my savior and my child's, how can I ever thank and repay you for all that you have done? How good, how noble you are! Assuredly, God will bless you! But, ah! that fiend, that monster!" she exclaimed, again springing to her feet. "This wrong shall be avenged! Do you hear, do you all——"

"There, be calm," said Justin, and as he whispered low, she immediately controlled herself, and kissing the child good-by, walked out to the carriage.

When she had returned to the hut, the distressed woman sat for the rest of the day thinking intently. Toward evening she went to look for Chloe, and greatly surprised the old Mammy by telling her that she was going on a journey and would be absent several weeks.

Chloe gazed at her in bewilderment for a time, then said: "Why, Chile, you am done gone plum crazy. Yer hain't fit t' take a step outer dis heah room."

"Indeed, you mistake, Mammy; I feel very, very strong. Come, do not bother about me; I must have my own way in this. Go pack my valise, and help me to the train."

"I s'pose you'll have your own way, honey, but I'se powerful sorry you won't listen to no one. Mammy knows best."

When Justin learned of his patient's sudden flight, he was greatly mystified, as were all concerned, and worried much, since she was not in a fit condition to travel.

After a fortnight, however, she returned as suddenly as she had disappeared, looking well after her trip. She had gained flesh and strength rapidly. As to her mission, she gave no hint and evaded all questioning.

"The doctor has a new housekeeper and I am to remain here and look after you," Annette informed her. "He thinks you are gasping your last."

"Yes; I remember that you told me he was looking for some one to take your place. But what about her? Is he pleased with her?"

Annette looked up quickly and seemed to study the woman's face.

"Is he pleased? Well, I should say so. He thinks her a veritable goddess, and declares that she is the most beautiful woman in the whole world. The servants are all gossiping. She has been on the premises but twenty-four hours, yet he follows her about like a pet pooodle. I have seen them laughing gaily together in the garden, where they are to be found most of the time. I ventured to tell him that she was an adventuress, but he flew into such a terrible rage I wished that I had kept still. He said I was only jealous, and that I had best keep my nose out of his affairs."

A gleam of satisfaction shone from the bright eyes of the listener, but she gave no other sign of interest.

"He is coming to see you this evening. I have used my wits to keep him away, but all to no purpose. I think you had better be feeling pretty low."

"I shall not see him, Annette. It would end in my killing him outright. Then, he must not note my great improvement. I shall barricade the door, he dare not force himself on my presence!"

True to her word, the enraged woman would harken to no appeal from the angry physician for an interview. She was dead to all pleading, so after some time spent in coaxing and threatening, he left in a great fit of temper.

"These Christian Science cranks are the most stubborn lot I ever ran across!" he declared. "They are all alike; they shut their ears and eyes and go headlong to their ruin!"

"I shall promise to see you in another month, not before then," came the voice from the inner room. "We may then come to some understanding. At present, I am too ill to argue with you."

"Either the medicine isn't working right, or the girl isn't giving it as she pretends. I must find out about this. I am somewhat alarmed. Should the woman recover, she might make me no end of trouble. Well, she must not live, and that is all there is about it!"

Such were the doctor's thoughts as he turned to go, then stepping back, he motioned the maid to come outside with him. After talking with her quite at length, he passed on, feeling greatly relieved, since Annette assured him that the woman was slowly approaching the end.

Calling the maid to her some hours later on, the wronged woman promised her a handsome sum if she would spy upon the doctor and housekeeper and report all that she could learn.

It was some ten days after this that Annette startled her by saying: "I guess there can be no question as to the doctor's getting on all right with the escaped nun, since he proudly told the servants that they were married on yesterday?"

"Married? Doctor Ellis has married his housekeeper? Is that what you are saying, Annette?" cried the astonished woman. "Ah! my plans are succeeding better than I most fondly hoped."

"And yet, I cannot understand them," said Annette.

"And yet I cannot understand them," said Annette.

"Have patience—you shall soon know all. His marriage bed shall prove his death bed! I need your assistance in one thing more, then you shall cross the ocean as you desire and which is perhaps best. Of your sin, let us not speak. I am trying to forgive you. How is my child—have you seen her?"

"Yes, several times. She is very happy and is learning fast. She can lisp several words, and they are very anxious to have you see her again."

"And Justin, my deliverer, my savior, that brave and good young fellow, what does he think about my absence—does he think me bereft of all reason?"

"He says he cannot understand you. He fears the doctor may slip from your grasp should his suspicions be too greatly aroused or should he discover that the child is gone. He is to be here in a little while to talk the matter over with you. He thinks you are making a mistake. He has been at the poultry farm many times, you know he is greatly attached to Zoe, and——"

"To whom?"

"To your child, Zoe."

"And is that what they call my dear little Marcia—she was christened so—Annette?"

"Yes, I know, but the doctor had me call her by this other name."

"It sounds like the name of some mongrel; never call her by that again, Annette. Oh, my poor, unfortunate little one! But revenge is coming. He shall be made to know, he shall be made to feel—but I must say no more, I must say no more!"

It was some three weeks later when a note was dispatched to the doctor by the invalid, saying that if he were disposed to call she would grant him an interview. She was watching for him when Justin thrust his head in at the door instead.

"Ah, 'tis you, my friend!"

"The doctor sent me to tell you that he is feeling too ill to call upon you, and——"

"Oh, this blessed news! I have known that it was coming! Now am I ready to take my revenge." She grew very feverish and excited as she flew about the room looking for her wraps. Then, calling Annette, she bade her drive with them to the mansion. "Come quick, I must be off. Come, Justin, my friend, I shall have need of you."

The doctor was reclining in an arm chair when, late in the afternoon, a visitor was announced.

The eager and excited woman did not wait for an invitation, but hurried at once to the doctor's study.

Upon seeing who his visitor was he instantly bounded to his feet. "What, you—you!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, it is my real self and not my corpse that you are looking upon, Dr. Ellis. Are you disappointed?"

"What does this mean? Explain yourself, Madam."

"Oh, there is plenty of time. Do not get so excited. Learning that you were ill, I thought to call and give a diagnosis of your case. You did this for me ten years ago, you will remember."

"There isn't much the matter, I assure you, Madam."

"Perhaps it amounts to more than you think. One cannot always tell about these things, you know. Then, I must confess to having little confidence in your ability to give the proper diagnosis of a case—a ten years' mistake is rather unpardonable."

"I understand. The wretch, that girl Annette, has been deceiving me. She said only this morning that you were dying."

"And you were sitting here mourning for me, I suppose?"

He walked toward the window and looked out. Then, turning suddenly about, he said: "Well, out with it! What have you to say?"

"Many things, many things, doctor. But first, tell me, how do you like the wife that I sent you?"

"That you——"

"Yes; see all the trouble that I have been to. You cannot imagine where I was fortunate enough to procure her, doctor."

"You are crazy, wild—mad! You talk like a jiggering idiot! This Christian Science has turned your brain, as it does every one's."

"Believe me, I have reason sufficient to answer my present needs, Doctor. You will shortly realize this. Now, if you think I have not met your wife, and did not send her here as housekeeper, I will give you proof of what I am saying. Ah! here she comes. How do you do, Queenie? There, do not come too near. You know me, Queenie?"

"Yes, you are my friend and benefactress. You helped me to escape from the colony. You have provided means and a home for me that I may die in peace, away from those revolting scenes. I am glad to help avenge your wrong and the child's."

During this conversation the doctor stood looking on, like an entrapped wild man. "Doctor Ellis," said his visitor, looking him hard in the face, "I have come to tell you just what you told me, in your merciless way, ten years ago, and have been telling me ever since. Dr. Ellis, you are a leper! When you told me this same thing, you told me a lie! I am telling you the truth! This woman whom you have honored with your name is a leper whom I procured from the colony and paid her handsomely to help avenge my wrong and my poor, innocent child's."

The guilty man reeled for a moment. His senses seemed stunned. Then, as the terrible realization came to him, he sprang forward, his eyes glaring like a madman's, as he shouted:

"I'll murder you! You vixen, you fiend! I'll strangle you! I'll kill you, woman!"

"Not yet; not just yet, my highly esteemed relative," said Justin, now coming into the room and pushing the doctor aside as he made a rush as though to carry out his threat. I have been the means of rescuing the child which you, worse than murderer, have had imprisoned all these years; I have also restored the woman to health. Had you not been punished thus, I should have handed you over to justice! Were this crime known, you would be mobbed and hung to the nearest tree. But this punishment, this living torture, is a better thought-out plan. There is no pity to extend. You who have had no pity for your victims deserve none at the hands of others."

A terrible fight now ensued, but the older man was no match for the young athlete, who speedily gagged and bound the other, then marched him to the dungeon and closed the heavy door upon him. A fortnight later he was found dead on his prison floor, with a pistol wound in his forehead.

As soon as matters could be arranged, all the parties concerned in this remarkable tragedy left for the Western Coast. The mother, hiding her identity under another name, that the world might never know of her daughter's blight or of the punishment which she had meted out to her enemy, devoted her life to enlightening and educating the child, who made wonderful progress. And when, twelve years later, the celebrated specialist, Justin Holbrook, led the beautiful and accomplished Marcia Bourne to the altar, it seemed incredulous that this fair type of womanhood could have passed her days amid such environment. She was to him the ideal woman whom his fancy had so often pictured and whom he had almost despaired of finding.

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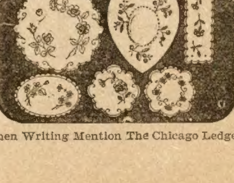

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One Was Sufficient.

Jimmy, aged five, had been naughty, and his mother had punished him in the good, old-fashioned way. His father pretended to be greatly shocked at overhearing the aggrieved youngster express a hope that a large stray bear might happen along some dark night to make a meal of his offending parent.

"But Jimmy," said his father, impressively, "you, shouldn't say such dreadful things. You should always remember, my son, that a boy never has more than one mother."

"Thank God for that!" breathed Jimmy, fervently.

A Good Father.

Smith—"Brown is certainly doing his duty as a parent."

Jones—"How's that?"

Smith—"He's trying his best to bring up his children the way he should have gone."

The Journalistic Instinct.

"Yes, sah," said Colonel Hoopthundah, editor of the Bluegrass Clarion, "that repo'tah of mine has scoahed fo'teen scoops so fah this summah."

"He must have a nose for news," comments the caller.

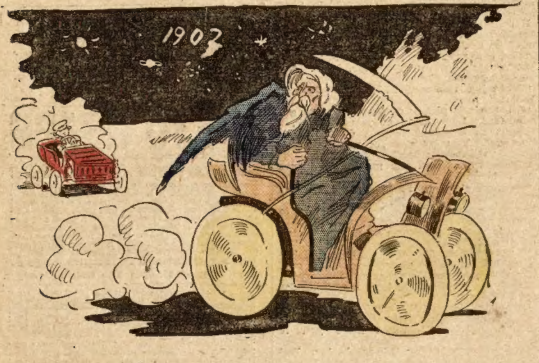
"I reckon that's just what yo' should call it, suh," responded Colonel Hoopthundah, shifting his revolver so that it served as a paper weight for some editorial copy. "Yes, suh. Eve'y one of those scoops, suh, yas a lynchin' bee. Yes suh. That repo'tah suttenly has a nose fo' noose."

After the Second Race.

Employer—Mr. Redink, you got off yesterday afternoon under the plea of being ill. I saw you afterward going to the races and you didn't appear at all ill.

Clerk—You ought to have seen me after the second race, sir. I was bad enough then.

THE EXIT OF 1903.



Father Time—"Gee! Here comes a machine right in my track. Such a little chauffeur, too! Good gracious, he's running right for me!"

Easy to Cure, but—

Doctor—So your husband is ailing again?

Mrs. Slimpurse—Yes; it's insomnia now. He can't sleep a wink.

"Ah, I'll soon cure him of that."

"I am sure you can."

"Thanks for your confidence. He is worried about something, I presume?"

"Indeed he is poor man. He lies awake all night wondering how he is ever going to pay your last bill."

Right in Line.

Hicks—He's trying berry culture now, you know, and he says he's having considerable success.

Wicks—Yes?

Hicks—Yes, although he admits the returns are small as yet.

Wicks—Well, that sounds natural. You might call that "success with small fruits."

Counter Proposition.

He—We must economize. Suppose, darling, that you try your hand at making your own clothes.

She—Oh! George, dear, I never could do that. Suppose I begin by trying to make yours.

Something Superior.

"Man is the superior of all other animals," said the naturalist.

"That may be your experience," said the old sea captain. "But you ought to have heard the way a parrot I had could swear."

To Avoid Publicity.

Young Author (who thinks himself famous)—"I believe I should enjoy my vacation better if I could go incognito."

Friend—"Good idea. Travel under nom de plume."

A Kindly Suggestion.

Purchaser (angrily)—"That cheap suit you sold me only a few weeks ago has gone all to pieces."

Dealer (benevolently)—"Mein frent, you dake de advize off an olt man vot knows de cloding trade, und don't puy a cheap suit next time. Let me show you zome high-priced goots."

Hard Pressed.

Ruth—And so you have accepted Percy? I thought you decided to refuse him.

Kate—So I did; but he kept pressing me and pressing me for a favorable answer until I—I——

Ruth—Surrendered at discretion?

Kate—Oh, dear, I don't know! I fear it was an indiscretion!

Easy.

In the temporary absence of the beauty editor this question was handed by mistake to the sporting editor:

"How shall one get rid of superfluous hair on the upper lip?"

"That's easy," he wrote in reply. "Push the young man away."

Liberality.

"Most of our people," said the outspoken parishioner, "are complaining that you are entirely too liberal."

"The idea!" exclaimed the Rev. Mr. Broadman. "It's very unkind of you, for I'm sure I never had occasion to make the same remark about any of you."

He Would Take Her Anyway.

"Would you still want me to be your wife if my father was a poor man?" asked the beautiful heiress.

"Yes," the duke replied, after a little pause; "in that case I would be enough of a curiosity to get rich exhibiting myself."

Delays Are Dangerous.

Lover—And so your mother does not believe in long engagements? I am delighted.

Miss De Broker—Yes, mamma says ever so many girls' fathers have failed during long engagements, and the poor things never got married at all.

A Windfall.

Mother—I have just heard something that you ought to know. Your father tells me that your husband is hopelessly involved.

Married Daughter—Isn't that lovely! Now, maybe, he'll make over all his property to me.

Couldn't Be Mistaken.

Friend—I say, doctor, do you know what became of Jiggsmith?

Doctor—Jiggsmith? Why, he's dead.

Friend—Dead! Are you sure of that?

Doctor—Of course I'm sure of it. Didn't I attend him during his last illness?

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

A Pardonable Mistake.

Hotel Proprietor—"What is that crowd outside looking at?"

Clerk (after a brief inspection)—"Well, I swan! That jay in No. 500 has twisted around his gas jet, and poked it out of the window, with the flame burning."

Proprietor—Front! "Take a pair of shears to No. 500, get that card which says:

'Don't blow out the gas.
Turn it out.

and cut off the last line."

Tough Times.

Rural Manager—"My season has been a failure, my folks are starving, and I should like to engage you to play Othello for a week."

Barn-stormer—"With pleasure, if your terms suit."

Rural Manager—"Well, I will give you fifty per cent, of all the vegetables that are thrown at you."

Not Patented.

Mrs. Slimdiet—"The boarders are all at the table. Where's the milk?"

Cook—"Here, mum; but it do look awful blue."

Mrs. Slimdiet—"Then hurry into the dining-room and pull down the yellow sunshades."

A Sarcastic Damsel.

"Jack proposed to me this morning!"

"Did you accept him?"

"Yes."

"Then your prophecy has come true?"

"What prophecy?"

"Why, last night you said Jack was foolish enough to do anything!"

A Wish.

Thinne—"Oh, I wish I had your voice!"

Thicke—"No doubt you would enjoy using it."

Thinne—"No, 'taint that, but I was thinking if it were mine I could stop it when I liked."

A Fine Kidney Remedy.

Mr. A. S. Hitchcock, East Hampton, Conn. (The Clothier), says if any sufferer from Kidney and Bladder Disease will write him he will direct them to the perfect home cure he used. He makes no charge whatever for the favor.

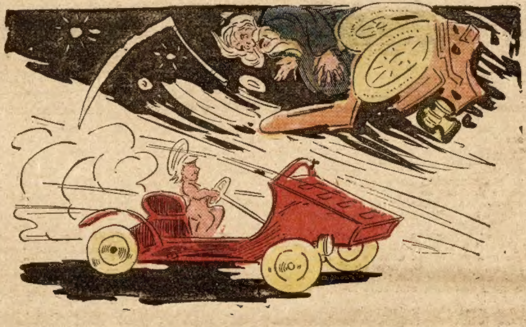
Queer.

"So you didn't sell the editor any jokes?"

"No."

"He had plenty on hand, I suppose?"

"Well, he certainly was out of humor."



Bang!!

She Understood.

Friend—If a big wagon made so much noise that you couldn't hear George when he proposed, how did you know what he said?

Sweet Girl—By the movements of his lips.

"That's wonderful! I never could do that in the world. What quick eyes you must have."

"Oh, I couldn't see his lips. They were too close for that."

A Bear Movement.

Visitor—Your church is a beauty. That handsome house next door is the parsonage, I presume?

Deacon De Good—N—o. Fact is, the parsonage is some distance uptown, but we intend to make an offer for one of these nearby residences soon.

"The price will be high, no doubt."

"Um—I think not. We shan't try to buy until after our new chimes are put in."

What Always Happens.

She—"Your proposal was quite unexpected."

He—"That being the case, you should have been prepared for it."

She—"Because why?"

He—"Because it's the unexpected that always happens, you know."

Time to Change the Subject.

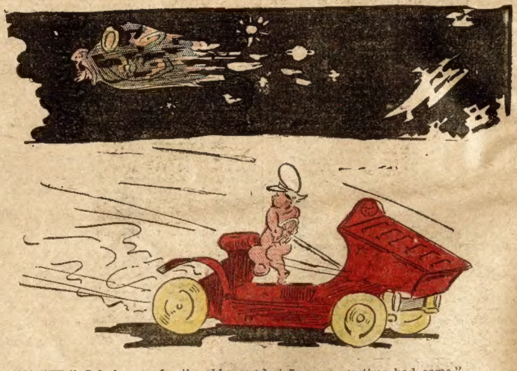
Professor—"Suppose you were engaged in the autopsy of a subject and it gave signs of life, what would you do?"

Student—"I think I should—change the subject, sir."

Bright Boy.

His Mother—If you really were at Sunday school, as you say, it's very strange that you smell so fishy.

Bobby—I guess that's because the lesson was about Jonah and the whale.



1904—"Well, I feel sorry for the old man; but I guess his time had come."

No Such Speed.

"I don't suppose the stage coaches run on Fifth avenue any more," said the visitor to New York."

"They never did," replied the native.

"Oh, yes, they did only a few years ago."

"You're mistaken. They used to pass up and down the avenue, but they never ran."

A Certain Significance.

"Do you regard money as the supreme test of success?" asked the man with the artistic temperament.

"No," answered the practical person, "but the absence of it is a pretty sure sign of failure."

All Signs Fail Sometimes.

Child—Uncle Jonas, do you b'lieve in signs?

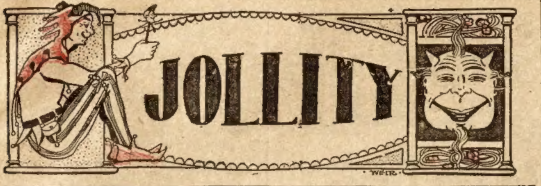
Uncle Jonas—Sometimes, my boy. Why do you ask?

Child—'Cause mamma said big ears was a sign of generosity, but you didn't gimme nothing on my birthday.

Shirking the Responsibility.

Widow Eames—How would my little Johnny like a new papa?

Johnny (aged 5)—Oh, you needn't shove the 'sponsibility on me, ma. It isn't a new papa for me, but a new husband for yourself that you are thinking about.



MEMORY MENDING

What Food Alone Can Do for the Memory.

The influence of food upon the brain and memory is so little understood that people are inclined to marvel at it.

Take a person who has been living on improperly selected food and put him upon a scientific diet in which the food Grape-Nuts is largely used and the increase of the mental power that follows is truly remarkable.

A Canadian who was sent to Colorado for his health illustrates this point in a most convincing manner: "One year ago I came from Canada a nervous wreck, so my physician said, and reduced in weight to almost a skeleton and my memory was so poor that conversations had to be repeated that had taken place only a few hours before. I was unable to rest day or night for my nervous system was shattered.

"The change of climate helped me a little but it was soon seen that this was not all that I needed. I required the proper selection of food although I did not realize it until a friend recommended Grape-Nuts to me and I gave this food a thorough trial. Then I realized what the right food could do and I began to change in my feelings and bodily condition. This kept up until now after 6 months' use of Grape-Nuts all my nervous trouble has entirely disappeared. I have gained in flesh all that I had lost and what is more wonderful to me than anything else my memory is as good as it ever was. Truly Grape-Nuts has remade me all over, mind and body, when I never expected to be well and happy again." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

There's a reason.

Look in each package for a copy of the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

The Beautiful Bride.

Pistol Pete—"How much to marry us, parson?"

Rev. Bill Blood (looking them over)—"Oh, I reckon fifty cents will—er—say, do you want all the frills throwed in—kissin' the bride an' all that?"

Pistol Pete—"Sure!"

Rev. Bill Blood—"Ten dollars."

Discouraged.

"There is no such thing as luck," said the sturdy self-reliant person.

"I can contradict you," answered the patient sufferer. "All I can say is that if there is I haven't seen it."

The Bachelor's Psalm.

Lives of henpecked men remind us,
  Who have not as yet been caught,
That we might leave sons behind us,
  But we rather guess we'll not.

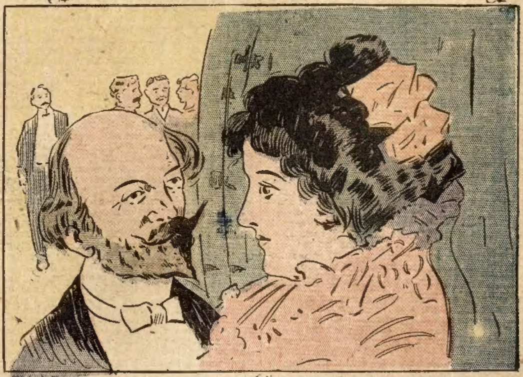
She that's trim may be a fat one
  She that's sweet, some day be grim,
When by merely looking at one
  She will squelch the soul in him.

Let us then go billing, cooing;
  Let us call them sweet and fair;
It is lovely to be wooing,
  But you'd better stop right there.

Immunity.

"You want to marry my daughter, do you? Well I'm free to say you're the most impudent upstart that ever——"

"Yes you're free to say it because you're her dad. If you wasn't I'd knock your old head off'n you!"



Husband—I wish you wouldn't look so glum; you should end the old year with smiles.

Wife—I would if I thought you would go through the old year without them.

Puzzled.

The teacher say that 2 and 2 make 4,
  But somehow that example I can't do;
For when I put down 2 and then 2 more
  It never fails to make just 22.

Served Him Right.

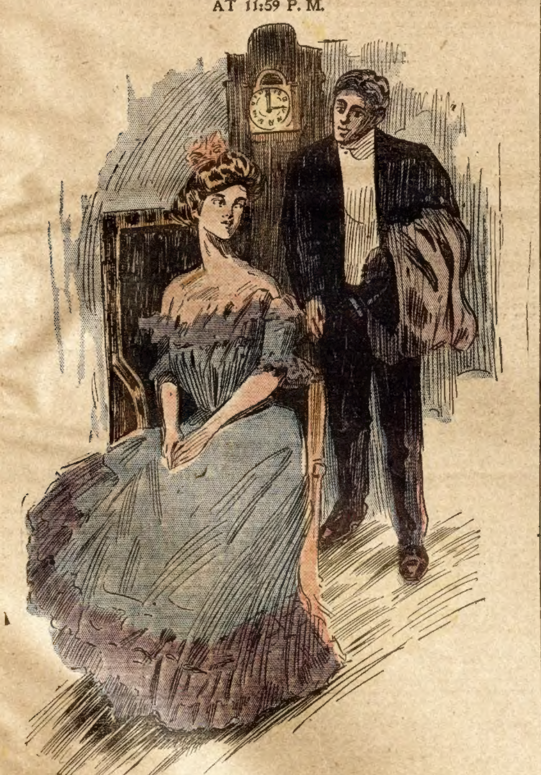
Mr. Jinks—"I see the editor of the trumpet is having trouble with his wife. She wants a divorce."

Mrs. Jinks—"I don't wonder. He was always printing articles about housework being healthful."

The Tactful Woman.

A tactful woman is a woman who can live within her income without seeming to.

AT 11:59 P. M.



He rose to go, 'twas New Year's Eve;
  "One kiss," he begged, "my dear."
She coyly said, "You cannot have
  Another kiss this year."

AGENTS WANTED

Free Gold Watch
This fully warranted Solid Gold Plated Watch, equal in appearance to a $25.00 Gold Filled Watch warranted 20 years, is given FREE to Boys and Girls or anyone for selling 20 pieces of our handsome jewelry at 10c. each. Send your address and we will send the jewelry postpaid, when sold send us the $2 and we will positively send you the watch, also a chain for quick work. Write to-day.
BOND JEWELRY CO., DEPT. 24, CHICAGO.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WE PAY $32 A WEEK AND EXPENSES to men with rigs to introduce poultry compound. Year's contract.
IMPERIAL MFG. CO., DEPT. 1 PARSONS, KANS.
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STARK TREES best by Test—78 YEARS. We WANT MORE SALESMEN PAY CASH Weekly
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$80 A MONTH SALARY and all expenses to men with rig to introduce our Guaranteed Poultry Remedies. Year's contract. Bank reference furnished. G.R.Bigler Co., X416, Springfield, Ill.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

AGENTS Write for our Free Outfit. It costs you nothing. We will start you in a paying business. Address Dept. 57, P.-O. Box 1501. THE BROWN HERB CO., New York, N.Y.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WANTED Reliable men in every locality to introduce our goods, tacking up show cards on trees, along roads, and conspicuous places, also distributing small advertising matter. Commission or salary $60.00 per month and expenses not over $2.50 per day. Steady employment to good men. No experience needed. Write for particulars. EMPIRE MEDICINE COMPANY, Buffalo, N.Y.
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$3 a Day Sure Send us your address and we will show you how to make $3 a day absolutely sure; we furnish the work and teach you free, you work in the locality where you live. Send us your address and we will explain the business fully, remember we guarantee a clear profit of $3 for every day's work, absolutely sure. Write at once.
ROYAL MANUFACTURING Co., Box 101, Detroit, Mich.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

MEN WANTED
to take orders for made-to-order suits from $8.50 up; and pants from $2.50 up, for spring and summer. WRITE NOW for full particulars, territory, terms and inducements. Large Commissions paid to good agents.
THE WARRINGTON W. & W. MILLS
DEPT. K, CHICAGO, ILL.
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George Clark
WILL GIVE YOU THIS RING
Solid Gold finished, set with Rubies and Pearls, FREE for selling 4 of my large Art Pictures at the reduced price of 25 cents. All different. No trouble to sell these pictures, they are handsome art productions, done in 10 to 17 colors, originals costing 200 to 500 dollars. The first four you meet will gladly take them at 25 cents to help you win the premium. The Ring guaranteed worth many times this small service, but want to introduce my pictures at once. Send No Money in advance. I trust you and will send the pictures representing four different and beautiful scenes, all charges paid, immediately.
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Why pay for a Talking Machine when you can get one for selling only 30 of our new fastest selling Fancy Articles! They sell quickly, having genuine value and merit. Send name and address, we will mail you postpaid and Trust You with 30 of our Specialties. Sell them at 10 cts. each. When sold, send us the $3.00 and we will forward a Talking Machine 20 Inches long. Uses either Columbia or Victor Disc Records. We will forfeit $100 to anyone who remits $3.00 and can prove we do not send a Talking Machine complete with 25 points, including a Comic Song. It reproduces songs, speeches, band music, etc., and can be used at all entertainments and concerts, in any size hall or room. It has piano finished base, with concert sound box and 14-inch metal Amplifying Horn. This machine is open for inspection at our offices. Send your order at once to
SAFE JEWELRY CO., 19 Warren St., New York.
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FREE GOLD WATCH
This watch has American movement fully warranted to keep correct time. The case is Solid Gold Plated, equal in appearance to a Gold Filled Watch warranted 20 years. We give it FREE to Boys and Girls or anyone for selling 20 pieces of our handsome jewelry at 10c each. Send your address and we will send the jewelry postpaid, when sold send us the $2 and we will positively send you the watch and chain.
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BIG PAYING BUSINESS For MEN, WOMEN.
Write for names of hundreds of delighted customers. Make $30 to $50 weekly. Do business at home or traveling, all or spare time, selling Gray outfits and doing genuine gold, silver, nickle and metal plating on Watches, Jewelry, Tableware, Bicycles, all metal goods. Heavy plate. No experience, quickly learned. Enormous demand. No toys or humbug. Outfits all sizes. Everything guaranteed. Let us start you. We teach you FREE. Write today. H. GRAY & CO., CINCINNATI, O.
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BIG MAIL FREE!
POST OFFICE
Would you like to get a lot of letters, circulars and packages? You probably know that manufacturers supply houses, wholesalers and publishers buy names and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, papers and circulars to. Good names and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive. We publish an Agents' Directory List containing names and addresses carefully arranged in alphabetical order. We send these Directory Lists to concerns we know are anxious for good names to send advertising matter to. Write your name very plainly so the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town also plainly written so that any mail addressed to you will reach you without fail. We have been publishing the Agents' Directory List for several years and refer to the editor of this paper who will tell you we are reliable. All we ask is that you send 10 cents in silver and we will enter your name in our Agents' Directory List as above stated. Write today. Address
AGENTS' DIRECTORY LIST,
INDIANA INDIANA COUNTY, PA.
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TURN OUT THE OLD, LET IN THE NEW.

BY NELLIE O. MOBLEY.

A little while ago, it seems,
The old year came, so glad
With happy hopes and sweetest dreams
For joyous youth she had.

And in the early morn of life
There's little room for cares;
The sorrows and the bitter strife
Come later, with the years.

The springtime ended all too soon,
Its sunsets flushed with gold;
Faded when the autumn came,
With winter she was old.

We saw her passing, feeble, bent,
With snowdrifts in her hair,
Bankrupt of years, her hours all spent,
She slept upon her bier.

And then there came a joyous peal
That ushered in the new,
That bade us "ring out all the false,"
"And ring in" but "the true."

The new year, standing, coy and sweet,
With hand upon the door,
Fears not the future hours to meet
Upon that radiant shore,

Where sunlight falls with golden gleams,
And the morn is fresh and fair,
For life is full of sweetest dreams
To this, the glad New Year.

Strange Trades in Paris.

It is astonishing with what zeal every means of earning an honest penny is plied in Paris. No city in the world has so many queer little trades by which those practicing them scrape together enough sous to make a living. The king of this class is, of course, the ragpicker. He starts out before the dawn armed with a lantern and a long hooked piece of iron, and explores the rubbish boxes placed outside every door in the capital before the municipal carts come to carry off their contents. Then there is the man who goes around with the spiked stick picking up the cigar and cigarette stumps which lie around the Paris cafes. There are men, too, who search the streets for fallen money, and who finally find enough to keep them from starvation.

One of the most characteristic of these strange tradesmen is the dog barber. The favorite dog of the Parisian is the French poodle, or "mouton," as he is popularly called. It is chiefly for his benefit that the dog barber exists. His headquarters are the banks of the Seine. Here the main body can be found at all times, though in the summer some go about the city carrying on their occupation from house to house. In the hot days one continually hears the long-drawn-out cry, "To-o-o-deur de cheins!" and meets the familiar figure of the dog barber, with his box of instruments slung over his shoulder. Many of them have their regular customers, whose houses they visit at stated intervals to make the toilet of these privileged poodles—for the Paris mouton is the "spoilt child" among dogs. He is clipped, brushed, combed, perfumed and generally has his "top-knot" fastened with a pink or blue ribbon. Some even wear gold or silver bracelets round one paw.

The result has been the development of the dog barber as an artist. He clips and shaves his customers' dogs in the most elaborate fashion. Some are left with shaggy manes, with a tuft at the end of the tail, to imitate a lion. Others, again, are clipped in stripes, making them look like black zebras, and others have their faces clipped, and nothing but a pair of fierce mustaches left, with fluffy bracelets of hair round each foot. At any time of the day, as long as daylight lasts, the dog barber will be found at work on the Seine embankment. Seated on a camp-stool, and generally surrounded by an admiring crowd, he clips and shaves according to the directions given him by the owner. The banks of the Seine have been selected for his operation because the river is handy to bathe the animal in after he has been clipped and combed.

Where Diamonds Are Found.

The surface of the country around Kimberley is covered with a red sandy soil, and it was soon ascertained that the diamond-bearing ground was located in sort of volcanic pipes or necks, which were probably at one time filled from below with a mixture of fragments of surrounding rocks mingled, forming the bluish colored, hard mass in which the diamond was embedded. The bluish color is due to the presence of lower oxides of iron, and this "blue ground," as it is known, is soapy to the touch, about the hardness of sandstone when mined, and readily friable when exposed to the air and moisture. In this blue ground Mr. Moissan has found some eighty species of minerals. The yellow ground extends below the surface red soil to a depth of seventy or eighty feet, and it was first supposed that diamonds, which were found abundantly in the yellow ground, would not be found in the blue ground beneath it. This theory proved erroneous, as time has shown, the yellow ground above being blue ground which has been acted upon by atmospheric influences, peroxidizing the iron and thus changing the color. The famous diamond mines in the neighborhood of Kimberley are the De Beers, Kimberley, Dutoitspan, Bulfontein and Wesselton. Other mines in the neighborhood are now being worked for diamonds, but as yet they are unimportant.

Mrs. Shaw's Wit.

Mrs. Leslie M. Shaw, wife of the Secretary of the Treasury, has always been noted for her wit. It is said of her that a young man of humorous bent one day exclaimed in her presence:

"What could be more dreadful for a wife, after mending her husband's coat, to find in one of the pockets a love letter from another woman?"

"Fortunately," said Mrs. Shaw, "that could never happen. The woman would find the letter and then she would not mend the coat."

BORN IN MYSTERY;

Or, The Heiress of Claremont Hall.

By Libbie Sprague Phillips.

Begun in No. 42, Oct. 17. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

PART IX.

"For a few weeks," Ellis continued, "all went well, and then the blow fell. Some one recognized in Edgar Manning the escaped prisoner, and again the prison doors were closed upon him. This was what I had feared, and it was this fear, Agnes, which kept me with them when I might have returned to you after seeing Marian safely with her husband. After my fears were realized and poor Dick gazed at me through prison bars and begged me not to leave him, I could not do so. I stayed, and with his sweet young wife visited him daily, and it was those visits alone that kept him from sinking in despair. But the trying ordeal began to tell on Marian's health, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I, at last, persuaded her to return home; and never shall I forget the parting scene between her and her husband within that dreary prison cell. It was an eternal farewell they both feared, and such it proved to be." Here Ellis buried his face in his hands, as though, even yet, he would shut out the heart-rending sight. "With Marian no longer where she could visit him and cheer and comfort him with loving words, Dick became actually wild with grief and despair, and one night in some unaccountable way he again broke jail, and made his way here to his native place. He had but one purpose in view—to look once again upon the face of his darling, but, alas! he found that the dear face was buried forever from his sight. It was Dick, himself, Agnes, who placed the wreath of flowers upon poor Marian's grave. After having done that, he stole up here to the house and, peering through the window, saw you bending over his sleeping child, and thanked God that it would be safe with you. Then through the open blinds of the library window he saw his father, the father who had driven him from home, and looked, as he supposed, upon his face for the last time; for with Marian dead, his life now seemed of no value to him, and of his own free will he returned to the prison and surrendered himself.

"Poor Dick! I had not told him of Marian's death, knowing that it would completely crush what little spirit he had left. He had found it out himself, and the result was as I had foreseen. His trial came off soon after this; he was convicted, and received his sentence. I was by his side all through that awful trial; I was with him when he was supposed to have been killed as he was being conveyed to the State prison. I, myself, thought that he was dead, when, with many bones crushed and broken, he was first taken from that fearful wreck. I had escaped with but a few bruises, and I at once directed my attention to the removal of Dick's body. He was, to all appearnces dead, and after his remains were given over to me, I had them removed to a private house near the scene of the wreck, where I chanced to have an acquaintance. It was while making the body ready for the grave that I discovered signs of life. I now swore the family to secrecy, employed a surgeon, and without telling him who his patient was, had poor Dick's wounds attended to, and was ere long rewarded by his return to consciousness. But for many days I feared that he would die, and it was at this time that I left him for that brief visit to you.

"Ah! my darling," and he kissed the dear face over which the tears were again falling, "you will never know how it wrung my heart to see distrust in your dear eyes that day when I so greatly needed love and sympathy and cheering words."

Agnes' self-control gave way altogether now, and not until her bitter weeping had somewhat ceased could he again resume his story.

"Oh, Ellis!" she moaned, "had I but known, how I would have blessed you!"

"But I am glad, dear, that I did not tell you. Had I done so, your life would have been one long agony of fear and dread. Better, I reasoned, that you should, in a measure, distrust me than to know that your dearly loved brother had met a fate far worse than sleeping in a suicide's grave. For I knew that if poor Dick lived I must keep him forever hidden from the world wherein he had hitherto lived, and I have done so. As soon as he was able to travel, I placed him aboard my yacht and went with him to a lonely island far out in the waters of the broad Atlantic, where, since then, we have lived in lonely solitude and gloom. The natives were kind; we had everything necessary for the comfort of the body, but, oh! how our hearts have hungered for home and loved ones! My dreams were ever of the bride who was wearing her life away in lonely waiting. Dick's were of his child, poor dead Marian's baby. Our only hope was that some day it would become known that Dick had been innocent; and that hope was so faint that it afforded us but little comfort. But, oh! the rapture that filled our hearts one morning when we read the confession of the real murderer, for I had seen to it that numerous papers should reach us in our isolated home. Poor Dick actually fainted from excess of joy, and all through the long homeward journey he has been wild with impatience. And, now, love, we must tell your father and prepare him for a meeting with his son, for Dick is waiting in the village to be assured that his father will welcome him home. And surely he will; after all these long years of suffering through which Dick has lived, he will now believe him when he again declares himself innocent of the crime of which he, his father, accused him."

"He knows that Dick was innocent; he discovered that years ago, and, oh! the bitterness of the discovery! He has been a changed man since then. Grief nearly killed him—grief and remorse. You will scarcely recognize him, Ellis; he has aged so terribly. But you wait here with Marian; I, myself, will tell him of the great happiness that has come to us, although I scarcely know how to do it. He is very excitable, and will go wild with joy, I know."

And she had judged aright. Although she used extreme caution in telling the wondrous news, long before she had finished he was pacing the floor like a mad man; and as soon as he learned that Dick still lived and was now in the village he waited to hear no more, and before Agnes had divined his intentions he had seized his hat and was tearing down the road toward the village.

He scarcely realized what he was doing. Somewhere within that quiet town, the boy, whom he had mourned as dead all these long years, was alive and waiting for a welcome home. And he should have it, aye, he should have it in such a way that he could have no doubt of its sincerity. But just where he was to find him, and in what way they were to recognize each other after all these years, to this he gave no thought.

On he went, all unmindful of the many curious looks that were bestowed upon him by those whom he met, and never once pausing in his headlong speed until he had reached the cemetery. Here he paused. The tall marble stone on which was chiseled Dick Claremont's name attracted his attention. The old sexton was here at work, and opening the gate, he passed inside, and rushing up to the mound which was known as Dick Claremont's grave he shouted, as he pointed to the gleaming marble shaft, "Tear it down!"

"Aye," he continued, as the old sexton bent upon him a look of astonishment, "tear it down; it lies; he who sleeps beneath is not my son! Dick is alive and well, and is coming home! Do you hear?" and he grasped the wondering sexton by the arm. "Do you understand? Dick, my boy, is coming home! He is here now, here in the village. I am going to find him. I am going——"

He paused for breath, and then as his eye chanced to fall on the stone which marked the grave of Marian Blake, his excitement seemed to increase, and laying his hand upon it, he exclaimed:

"Tear this down, also! Tear it down and in its place erect a new one, one that shall tower high, high above the others, and on it inscribe the Claremont name, that it may tell to the sneering world that she who lies sleeping there was Dick Claremont's loved and honored wife. For she was. Do you understand, Harris? She was Dick's wife, the girl who, when his cruel, idiotic old father drove him from his home, went and shared his lonely life, aye, his wretched life! made so by cruel suspicions, bitter accusations, false condemnations and damnable imprisonments, and she, this dear, trusting, self-sacrificing, angelic creature"—and he dropped on his knees beside the low mound, and in his excitement emphasized each word by striking the turf which covered the lonely grave with his hand—"she," he resumed, "shared it all, and loved and believed in him when all the world was against him and when a brutal crime pointed an accusing finger at him, she let her dear name be sunk in dishonor rather than reveal the disgrace which shadowed his."

Tears were streaming from his eyes now and his voice was choked with sobs, but still he continued:

"Let justice be done, Harris, and let it be done at once. People have scorned her memory and this grave has been dishonored, but those who have sneered and scorned and scoffed are not worthy to so much as stand here beside her precious dust! And I—I also was an old fool! I also scorned her; I slandered her name; I—oh, Marian, my daughter, for as such you shall be spoken of now, forgive me! Can you hear Marian; can you see, can you look down from your heavenly home and know that justice is being done at last, that your dear name is to, henceforth, be loved, honored and revered; and when God's roll is called on the judgment day I shall be proud of you when you answer to the name, Marian Blake Claremont.'"

The name died from his lips with a low wailing sob, and as his face had been bent low over the grave he had not noticed that a stranger had approached and listened to the words which had fallen in tones of great excitement from his lips; nor did he realize that any one was near until a hand was gently laid upon his shoulder and a dear, well-remembered voice said softly, "Father."

He was on his feet in an instant and father and son were clasped in each other's arms.

Dick Claremnot had, while waiting for Ellis Deering to summon him to the home of his boyhood, come to visit the place where his beloved wife was sleeping; and there by the grass-grown grave of hte woman who had been loved by one and despised by the other, everything was explained and forgiven between the son and the father who had wronged him so cruelly.

The wondering old sexton now advanced and gave the mysterious stranger a long, searching look. The raven locks were thickly streaked with silver and the long years of sorrow had given a careworn expression to the handsome face; but the flashing eyes had lost none of their old-time brilliancy, and it was Dick Claremont's voice beyond a doubt that greeted him with: "How do you do, Harris; you surely have not forgotten me?" and involuntarily his eyes wandered to the stone which bore Dick's name, as though he felt that he who slept beneath had risen from the dead.

"It is I in the flesh," Dick said, with a sad smile, divining at once the old man's thoughts; "the poor fellow whom you buried there and whose grave you have tended so faithfully all these years was not Dick Claremont."

"Praise God for this day!" the old man exclaimed as he grasped Dick's hand, "but why you have allowed all to believe that you were dead, I cannot understand."

Good news travels fast; some one in the village had recognized Dick, and a servant of Doctor Deering's, who had been making some purchases there, went home with the wonderful news of his return alive and well.

After his first shock of surprise the doctor at once thought of Ellis. He and Dick had been inseparable in their youth; if Dick Claremont was living, he surely knew where Ellis was and he started for Claremont Hall immediately. He had not gone far before he was overtaken by the Major and his long-lost son, and his first words, after having greeted Dick, were:

"My own boy, Dick, for God's sake, tell me where Ellis is; you must know!"

He is at Claremnot Hall this minute," interposed the Major before Dick could speak; and then grasping the doctor's hand, he continued, "You must bless him, Doctor, as I shall do. I have not seen him yet, but Ellis Deering shall have the choicest blessing ever bestowed on mortal man, for he has sacrificed the best years of his life in saving my boy, but for him, this happy day never would have dawned for me!" Then in a disconnected way the strange story was told to the doctor, whose delight made him feel inclined to break into a run, but whose infirmity of age prevented him from doing so.

But the Hall was reached at last and the meeting between Ellis and the old man, who had so long watched for his return, was a loving one; while the old Major could not find words strong enough to express his gratitude to this man, who for long years he had thought was a mean, false, unprincipled villain.

But who could describe Marian's feelings when at last her father stood before her, and the same handsome face that had gazed at her from the canvas which was still hanging on the wall, and which, in her childish innocence she had loved as her father, looked into his shining eyes, and as he folded her within his loving arms, said:

"My own dear child, Marian's precious baby!"

Then holding her at arm's length, he gazed fondly at the dear face so very like his own. "I had hoped that you resembled your dear mother," he said, "but I shall love you none the less that you do not"

"Ah, Dick!" and the Major laid his hand caressingly on Marian's head, "if you knew all, you would thank God for the resemblance to yourself. It was the wistful pleading look of those dark eyes so like yours that won for her the love of my stony old heart. I didn't want her at first—of course, I had no idea of the truth; I thought she was a nameless waif that had been thrown upon our charity. I called her a brat. I—oh, Dick, my boy, let me hear you again say that you forgive me; there is so much, so very much to be forgiven!"

"But I forgive you, father, fully and freely."

Then as the tears were again streaming over the old man's face, Marian wound her arms around his neck and kissed his wrinkled cheek. "All these sad things must be forgotten as well as forgiven," she said; "we will think of nothing this happy day but the joy that will henceforth be ours. Grandpapa, you must forget all else."

"Grandpapa! Ah, my precious child, how that word thrilled my heart as it fell from your childish lips in the years gone by! I have grieved deeply at the thought that you were not my grandchild, and now to know that you really are—oh, Marian! what joy!"

Agnes Claremont's heart also echoed this thought. What glorious joy had indeed come to them! One hour of perfect happiness had chased away the sorrowful, patient look of resignation which her face had worn so long, and a glad, joyous, animated look had taken its place, giving to her a youthful appearance and making her as strikingly beautiful as she had been in her youthful days. Dick as he clasped her in his arms and gazed once more on that lovely face, wondered if it could be possible that nineteen long years had rolled away since he had seen it last.

This brought to his mind the wild night, when, an escaped prisoner, he had crept home in the darkness and taken what he supposed was his last look at the faces of those whom he loved. He had seen this dear sister bending over his sleeping child with a look of thoughtful tenderness on her face which made him understand that his child was safe with her. Then, as the baby stirred in its sleep, the blankets were thrown aside revealing to him the small, angelic features. The memory of that little waxen face had been in his heart all these dark, lonely years, and the thought that his child was safe within his dear old home kept his soul from fainting as it would have done had he felt that it had been thrown upon the world an outcast.

"Ah, my sweet sister," he murmured, as he held her closer to him, "little did you think when, out of the goodness of your loyal heart, you took my baby, that it was that very act that was to save your brother's heart from actually breaking. Let me thank you for it now; let me bless you for the long years of loving care which you have given her. And for the love which you gave my darling wife when slanderous darts were falling thick and fast all about her, cruelly wounding the tender, sensitive heart to its death—words fail me, Agnes, when I try to thank you for that. It was a deed which God alone can reward, and I know He will, aye, I know He will."

Tears choked his utterance now, and as this dear brother's face was laid close to hers, Agnes felt that she was already rewarded by the sweet peace and joy which filled her heart.

"And now," said Doctor Deering, after the excitement of all these happy greetings had somewhat died away, "we must have a wedding sometime in the near future. My home has been a lonely home so long, and I have, since Lottie left it, yearned more than ever for a woman's presence within those gloomy old walls. Ellis, you must soon bring to it your bride."

"I surely will," he answered, as he placed his arm about the faithful woman who had waited for him so long, "but who is Lottie?"

Then, after being told of the Western cousin who had tried to brighten, for a few brief years, the home which his absence had made desolate, he expressed a wish that this cousin Lottie were here tonight that she might share their happiness

"I shall write to her in the morning," Marian said, "and tell her the wonderful news" Then as she remembered that she could tell Lottie that the twentieth of June would be her wedding day—for there was no reason why she should not be a happy bride—she felt that her letter would indeed contain glad tidings, for the honeymoon was to be spent with Lottie in her far off Western home.

In the servants' quarters a great dinner was being hastily prepared; for the old cook who had been in the family ever since Dick was a baby, felt that the house contained nothing too good for the young master who had been restored to them. And, of course, Ellis and Doctor Deering were to remain and partake of this sumptuous repast. The dining room and table must be decorated, so the housekeeper said, and Marian informed her that there was plenty of time for the work, as no one cared to eat yet, there was so much to be talked about

The Major, perfectly bewildered with happiness, paced up and down the room, dividing his attention between Ellis and Dick, and occasionally kissing Marian's bright, happy-looking face and calling her his dear grandchild. While Marian herself, never left her father's side, who, with his arm encircling her waist, told her, in low, tender tones, of the lonely years through which he had yearned for his child.

Rumor always flies. The news that Dick Claremont was alive and at home, soon spread through the village, and never had the little town been in such a turmoil before, never had such general sympathy and delight been shown. And many, feeling that they could not rest until they had seen for themselves if the wonderful news was true, drove out to the Hall; and when they returned and made known the fact that the girl whom they had scorned and despised was actually Dick Claremont's daughter, excitement ran high; and more than one haughty maiden, remembering the cruel way in which Marian had been treated, wondered if the heiress of Claremont Hall would now snub them in return.

The words which Doctor Deering had spoken in regard to a wedding in the near future, made it easy for Ellis to speak the words which had been trembling on his lips ever since he had first clasped Agnes in his arms. "Let us be married at once." And as the old clergyman, who had also felt that he must see for himself if Dick Claremont had actually returned, was announced, Ellis bent his head and whispered the words in Agnes' ear. Then, as the old man, after satisfying himself that Dick was really in the flesh, now turned to him with kindly words of greeting, he laid his hand on his shoulder and said, as he drew Agnes to his side. "I am so glad you have come; stay and make this lady my wife."

The clergyman's face was a study. "Nineteen years ago," he said, "I was engaged to perform the marriage ceremony for you two; can it be that I am the one that is to perform it at last after all these years!"

"Yes," returned Ellis; and as the wedding has already been deferred, as you say, nineteen years, I see no reason for its being deferred another hour. Make her my wife at once, that is——" And without finishing the sentence, he turned to the Major and, extending his hand, said, "Major, may I have her now?"

This interesting story of love and mystery will be continued in next week's Ledger, leading the reader to some very dramatic and remarkable situations. Every subscriber is entitled to our free cameras and patterns as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

A Paying Investment.

When Alaska was purchased by the United States in 1867, its value was lightly regarded. The price paid—$7,000,000—was thought to be excessive, and there was much popular opposition to the terms Yet in thirty-six years the Government has received back in revenues not only the sum expended, but $2,000,000 more. During the same period Alaska and the adjoining Canadian Yukon territory have supplied fish, furs and mine products amounting in value, at a conservative estimate, to $375,000,000. Goods worth about $40,000,000 a year are now sent back in return, and the amount of American, English and Canadian capital invested there is probably not less than $125,000,000.

The Sunken Cannon.

(Continued from page fourteen)

think of Sapono—could travel and polish yourselves up a bit? You need to."

The Rustlers went away for a time, and soon it became known how they were able to do so.

Rustler had had some blank railway passes printed in the name of his projected line and, as "president" of the road, had filled a lot of them out, signed them and sent them, each accompanied by a graciously-worded letter, written on the printed letter-head of the "company," to presidents of different important railroad companies in the Western States. By an exchange of courtesies, he had received passes over their lines giving them a tremendous mileage and penetrating to remote and interesting parts of the country

It was the proprietor of the "Hot Blast," who had tired of waiting for payment for the blank "passes" and letter-heads, who gave publicity to Rustler's successful little combination of business and pleasure.

The Rustlers had hoped, by this stroke, to overawe Larnsville—and Lathers; but on the day after their return the merchant decreed that "Lord" Rustler should no longer have credit for household supplies at his store. By a similar stroke he had, a number of times, brought the Rustlers to terms when they had shown a disposition to ignore Sally and himself. It was a bitter blow to the Rustlers, but they did not weaken

Every fine afternoon, and every comfortable evening, arrayed in their most elegant and resplendent finery, "Lord" and "Lady" Rustler sat in state on their big porch and regarded scornfully every one who passed. At length they gave a large party at which their guests were prominent people from out-of-town. They essayed a second function of that kind and it failed. The outsiders had come to an understanding of the situation and refused to go against the sentiment of all the people of Larnsville.

After that, "Lord" and "Lady" Rustler sat in their large, lonely parlor and played checkers and quarreled over the games and otherwise made life miserable for each other. After three months of that, they had become only a memory to their neighbors.

Before spring, Lathers sold out to one of his clerks and removed to a neighboring city, where he and his wife were referred to as 'those jays" and where they quickly mastered the last degree in the ancient and numerous order of "have-beens."

All through the winter Lem studied hard under Professor Gaylord's tuition and gained in scientific knowledge and in social favor. He watched the weather, as spring came on, fearing for his bridge, which, frozen into the mill-pond, was being managed pretty well by John Jarrett's John, who had so far forgiven Lem for having thrashed him that he was willing to receive his hire

At length the spring rain set in in earnest. The Tionesqua was rising rapidly and the Neoga, longer, wider, slower and fed by fewer mountain torrents, was certain to swell to a flood. Lem and Parker went up to the mill and found the ice breaking up. The old river groaned and thundered as the frozen water and the running water warred with each other. Gradually the running water triumphed. The ice below the bridge went over the dam in many thousand pieces.

The bridge was freed now, and Lem and Parker and John Jarrett's John and Brand and another man "swung" it and it rested safely against the shore, inside of a protecting boom. There, gradually the ice in the big mill-pond went, in a crunching and groaning mass, down the river.

Out on a little island, below the place of the bridge and not far from the brink of the dam, was a tool chest full of valuable tools, which had been left there by a carpenter who had done some repair work on the dam only two or three days before. The man had pushed the chest out over the smooth ice and pulled it up on the bit of land. The river was rising rapidly and if the chest and its contents were to be saved, some one must go out for them in the mill-boat, a little skiff propelled by means of two sturdy oars. Lem volunteered to go.

The boy reached the island in safety, but as he was trying to load the chest in the skiff the boat got away from him and was swept over the dam. There was no boom long enough to cover the space between the bank and the island, even if a boom could have withstood that augmenting current.

Parker kicked in the door of the old "company" store and disappeared in the building, to emerge soon bearing a life preserver which was among the queer things stored in the building.

"Git a rope!" he shouted

John Jarrett's John began to haul a rafting-rope out from the shadow of the approach to the float bridge

"Too heavy," said Parker. "Git all the clothes-lines in the neighborhood. Don't wait to ask for 'em—jist cut 'em down." He was obeyed and soon had a long, slender line attached to the life preserver. Then, when he had got within the circlet of rubber, he said: "Now I'm goin' out there an' send Lem back with the preserver. You fellows keep a good hold on the rope"

He plunged in and swam out through the icy waters and the current carried him to the island. If he was cold and tired he did not let Lem know it. Quickly adjusting the life preserver to the boy, he said

"Jump in an' swim for yer life. They'll haul ye ashore. Then ye can take the preserver up to the upper boom and let it down to me. Go on, boy. Don't ye see I'm tryin' to square things?"

Lem reached the shore safely. When Parker had made half the return journey he was caught by a rush of ice and bruised and mangled and strangled to death.

He had redeemed himself, but he could not go to Lizy, except to be buried beside Bennie.

The End.

THE COLD-WATER MAN.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

George Rone was a firm believer in the medicinal virtues of cold water. What cold water would not effect, in the way of curing the ills which flesh is heir to, might as well be given up as impossible.

According to George's theory, if a man only drank enough cold water, and soaked himself enough in cold water, he would live forever, if no accident took him off suddenly.

He set up a sort of cold water cure at his house, obtaining his supply of water from a well dug at a height sufficient to throw the water to the second floor of his dwelling, for George lived in the country, where water in the house is a rare luxury.

In the bathroom was a large upright tub, five or six feet higher than a fair-sized man's head, and in this tub George passed a large part of his time, doctoring himself.

His wife was a timid, yielding little woman, and she was constantly made the subject of her husband's experiments in the cold water business.

She had neuralgia, and though she bore it for a long time in silence, preferring the pain to George's doctoring, in an unguarded hour she groaned aloud, and her fate was sealed. A patient to coddle was Rone's pet desire, and he began the business with vigor. Poor Mrs. Rone was showered and packed and sponged and submerged until she was pretty much soaked away, and one day George turned on too much water and it went over her head, and washed the life entirely out of her

Poor woman, afer she went to her long home—which was, properly speaking, a short home, seeing as she was only four feet five—her husband lamented that she died from lack of cold water, instead of from superabundance. For, if she had only done her duty by herself, and bathed properly, she would have had strength enough to have cried out, or burst open the door of the bathing tub, and so have been saved.

When she been dead a year, Mr. Rone made arrangements for supplying her place. Time was short, he said; and if he ever calculated on having a second wife, now was his time.

His choice fell on Patty Fields, a spinster of forty, with a temper like a ten-horse-power steam engine, though she generally kept it under, and was all the better woman for having it.

She was not a believer in the cold water doctrine, but George liked her quite as well. He should convert her, he said, and thus add another member to the cold water clique.

The wedding day came; the feast was spread and the guests assembled. The ceremony was to take place at eight o'clock in the evening, and the appointed time arrived, and still the bridegroom tarried.

The guests began to whisper together, and look grave; the parson took to reading the Bible; Patty shed a few tears, as in duty bound, and spotted her lavender tie with the salt water, and old Major Fields, her father, who had "seen service," and was as plucky as a boy of twenty, put on his slouch hat, shouldered his old rifle, and proceeded to Rone's house, with vengeance in his heart.

The servant girl giggled when she opened the door and saw him, and when he asked for Mr. Rone, she conducted him to the bathroom with alacrity. There he found the missing bridegroom, up to his chin in water, splashing about like a frog, and evidently enjoying himself much on the same principle.

"You infernal scoundrel!" cried old Fields, "what do you mean by keeping my darter in suspense, and the weddin' folks a waitin'?"

"Good gracious, Major!" exclaimed George, "it can't be eight o'clock, can it?"

The Major held out to him the old "bull's-eye" watch, which had belonged to his grandfather, and its hand pointed to the ominous hour of nine.

"Well, well, well!" exclaimed George, springing out of the bath, and putting himself inside his clothes with no waste of time, "did ever anybody see the beat of that? Why, I got into the bath at just six o'clock, and I would have sworn it was only seven now. Time passes quickly when a man is engaged in the cause of science. I was observing the beautiful effects of cold water in opening the pores of the epidermis"

"Upper dermis and lower dermis be cussed!" cried old Fields, angrily. "A man that has to soak himself three hours afore he can come to his own wedding deserves a horse-whipping. Are you calkilating, sir, to be married or not?"

"Certainly, Major, certainly—to be sure!" said George, hurrying up his toilet, under the supervision of his intended father-in-law and the old rifle.

The wedding was a little later than the time appointed, but the guests had better appetites in consequence of the delay.

Mr. and Mrs. Rone had no bridal tour, but went at once to housekeeping. George did not find a very pliant subject for cold water experiments in his second wife. She had a will of her own, and absolutely declined to submit to any cold water doctoring.

George felt personally aggrieved over her conduct, for he was sure that she had symptoms of biliousness, and he had great faith in cold water for that difficulty. Various were the experiments which he adopted to induce her to try his specific—she was obdurate

One night Mrs. Rone went to bed unusually exhausted from a hard day's work. She slept like a top, but some time in the night she was awakened by a sensation of extreme coldness

She put out her head, and lo! there were evidences of a deluge all around her. She always had matches under her pillow, and she scratched one. Its light showed her that her bed had been moved into the bath room, and the water had been turned on, and had risen to the height of her bed. Everything was soaking wet, and the water was steadily rising.

Mrs. Rone was a woman of action. She knew that George must be at the bottom of it, and she got a light and paddled around up to her knees in water to find him. He was hidden in the bathtub, peeping out through a hole at the side, near the top, laughing to himself at the success of his experiment to give his wife a bath.

Mrs. Rone's temper was aroused. She very quietly fastened the door of the tub on the outside and let in the water. It poured over the wretched prisoner in torrents, and in a few minutes would have been above his head, but for the fact that he had climbed to the top of the tub, and was clinging on with both hands to a bar across the top.

"Let me out, Patty. For Heaven's sake, let me out!" he shouted.

"Not by a long chalk!" cried Patty. "I want to soak you clean through. You know you've always insisted upon it that the beauty of bathing was in being well soaked. Make yourself easy, and try to bear it. It's all in the cause of science."

It was cold weather, and the hard-hearted Patty carried the matter so far that it came near being the death of poor George, who was beginning to congeal, and whose teeth chattered like castanets before he was let out. He had an attack of rheumatism which lasted for six weeks, and during that time his wife had the well which supplied the bathroom filled up, and thus the supply of water was cut off.

George, wisely deciding that it was no use to pursue science under such difficulties, has turned his attention to raising squashes, at which he is very successful.

But whenever he sees any water, he always shakes his head and sighs, probably with the remembrance of what "might have been."

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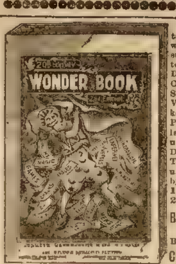

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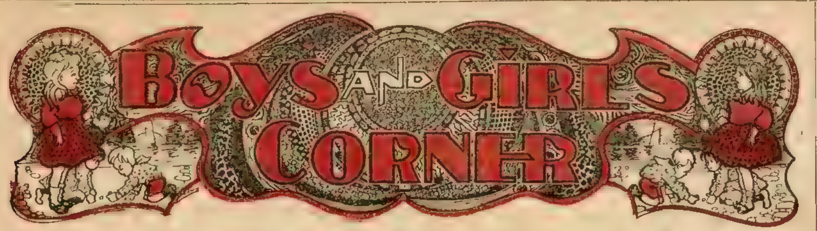

THE SUNKEN CANNON;

Or, HOW SAM PARKER MADE GOOD. By ORLANDO R. MORA.

Begun in No. 45, Nov. 14. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SATAN A BAD PAYMASTER.

"What d'ye mean, Bill?" asked Sam Parker eagerly. "Have ye seen my Bennie dead or are ye workin' some game?"

"I really did see 'im."

Brand was paler than Parker, and it was evident that he was as full of trouble and apprehension.

"Don't be too hard on me, Sam," he pleaded. "I s'pose I'm to blame for it, but I didn't have any notion it was goin' to end as it did. It'll look worse for me now, I know. I oughter made a clean breast of it the day it happened."

"An' when did it happen?" asked Parker, breathlessly.

"On circus day—the very day he disappeared. I'd rather talk with ye alone. Can't I?"

"Yes; come into the mill. Say, boy, here's ten cents for yer trouble. Now run along, won't ye?"

John Jarrett's John took the coin and turned his back on Parker and Brand and the two men went into the mill and sat side by side on some boards.

Brand, possessed with the idea of raising the cannon that had so long lain at the bottom of the Neoga, opposite the southern part of Larnsville, had, on circus day, persuaded Bennie to help him in the task. They had really gone back to the Neoga mill, as they were reported to have done, and there secured the rafting-rope which had been the cause of hostilities between Lem and Brand some time before. Brand had chosen this day to raise the gun because he had argued that the villagers, interested in the circus, would have little time or inclination to give attention to events on the river. He and Bennie had got the cannon nearly to the surface of the water, with the rope round it. His foot had slipped and he and the boy had been thrown into the water. Somehow, Bennie had become entangled in the rope and had been drawn down to the river bottom with the huge mass of iron. Brand had tried to save him, but had been unable to do so. That was the truthful explanation of Bennie Parker's disappearance. The boy's threat to run away with the circus had been known to Brand and the latter had availed himself of it to escape suspicion that otherwise might have attached to him. The flood had washed the body ashore below the town and Brand had seen it and recognized it.

"Would any one know it that might look at it?" asked Parker.

"Well, not exactly. The face is all past knowin' an' the clothes is mostly washed off. I knowed 'im mostly by the piece o' raftin'-rope that was fast to 'im."

"And did ye tell 'em 'twas my Bennie?"

"Why should I? It might ha' got me in trouble needless. I knowed they thought 'twas Lem an' I let 'em think so, but I thought you an' your folks 'ud know better an' so I come to you to tell the truth an' ask ye not to be too hard on me."

"On one condition you'll have no trouble about this."

"What's that?"

"It'll be better for you an' for me if they keep on thinkin' it's Lem," answered Parker. "Just you say it's Lem an' stick to it, talkin' an' swearin', an' you're all right. I don't have no truck with my wife since Lem was drowned. She blames me, but 'twas an accident, same as yourn with Bennie. She thinks Bennie's alive. Let 'er keep on thinkin' so. Why make 'er trouble more'n she's makin' herself?"

"That's right," said Brand, in a tone of relief. "Ye can depend on me, Sam. This lets me out of it all O. K."

And he did not fail Parker. His self-interest was too strong to admit of his even thinking of doing that. Parker thought he was getting good testimony cheaply, and from his viewpoint he certainly was. It cost the father a pang to coffin his son's body and send it under a name not his own to be buried by strangers far away, but that is the way in which he had to dispose of it in order to carry out his plan to capture the ten thousand dollars that Sim Bowers had promised him under certain conditions. He bore no resentment to Bill Brand. Under all the circumstances that was impossible, for Brand was the lesser sinner of the two of them. He and Brand both hoped that, after all that they had said and done, Lem's body would not come to the surface in evidence against them.

Parker had done nothing toward a resumption of business. Since the flood he had been idle, apparently aimless. He had not gone to his former home and had not seen Lizy. Tunker had found employment with some one else and avoided him. It was not pleasant for him there. He would not remain there a day after he got the ten thousand dollars. His only source of revenue was the ferry, and that he turned over to Brand. When he asked Mr. Lathers for interest on his invested money, the merchant informed him that it would not be payable for nearly a year. When he asked Lathers to relieve him of his investments, the merchant explained that he was not in a position to do so. Then he found fault with Lathers vigorously, and the merchant replied:

"Parker, there's bad talk going round about you. You know better than I do how true it is. If it was about me, I'd get out, not stand round looking for trouble. There may be a lot of it in pickle for you."

This tersely-worded and forcibly-spoken hint Parker appropriated to himself. He went to an oil town, a hundred and fifty miles distant, and there waited for the ten thousand dollars Sim Bowers had promised to send him, with what patience he could command, until Bowers wrote him thus:

"Body and affidavits O. K. No need of further expenditure on you. Blessed is the man who expects nothing, for he will get it."

CHAPTER XXX.

WAS IT A PHANTOM?

Parker did not even swear. He was too much put out by Bowers' coldly impudent communication. He read and re-read the brief letter, then sat down in his room in the little third-rate hotel in the bad-smelling oil town in which he was sojourning and thought hard and bitterly about the years that he had lived and lost. How dark they were and how the memory of them reproached him! There were only two rays of light in them all—Lizy and Bennie—and they had gone out about the same time, and now the night of his wasted years was come and its twilight was gathering into itself the ghosts of his despised opportunities.

After a while he got out his old leather wallet and counted his money. He had eleven dollars left, all told. Next morning, about ten, he woke up in a low dance house, with his pockets inside out and bulging mockingly. On the table before him was a silver dime.

He clutched it and, rearranging his clothing, went up to the bar. The barkeeper greeted him smilingly.

"You came in here whooping late in the night, and your financial ruin must have come on you about seven this morning," he said. "I was cleaning up here and there were two other men in here besides you. You were snoring. I went into the back room and when I came back you were alone and your pockets were out. I just let you sleep. Sure, thought I, his trouble will come to him soon enough—poor devil!"

"Poor devil! Am I a devil?" Parker whispered to himself. "Not exactly—yet. But I'm a servant o' the evil one an' he ain't usin' me square—or else he's jist fittin' the punishment to the crime a little too close to suit me—one or the other, likely the other."

"Whisky," he said, laying the dime—his last cent—on the bar.

"Certainly," was the bartender's cheerful response, as he swept the money into his till before making a move to fill Parker's order. He had served other men who were in Parker's financial condition, and he remembered that some of them had got the drinks in their hands and then had taken back the coins and then talked him out of them on the plea that they would soon need them to pay for food. There are some arguments that even a hardened liquor-seller cannot ignore. All men must eat.

After he drank Parker sat down and slept. He was awakened by a man who was shaking him roughly and calling out loudly.

"Hi, there! Hi, there!"

Parker's first thought was of robbers.

"I hain't got a copper!" he exclaimed as if the thought was funny to him.

"You don't need any. Everything's free at my place. This is my opening day. Come along. The spirit is waiting."

"Spirit's a-waitin', eh? Well, 'twon't have to wait long fer me on them terms. I'm with ye. Whar's yer place?"

"Come on."

He followed the stranger out of the dance house and along the muddy street, for there were not many sidewalks in the place. The man did not look to Parker exactly like a saloonkeeper, though he might have been one once. He pushed Parker into the open door of a square, rough-boarded building in which, evidently, there was but one large room. This room was filled with chairs, arranged with more or less regularity, and at its rear side was a low platform with a fragile desk in front. Twenty or thirty men and women were in the place and more were coming in.

"Damn it!" Parker muttered. "I'm in a mission meetin'-room. Sharp expounder, that. Guess I'll get out."

He half rose to his feet, then sank back upon the chair.

"Guess I'll stay, after all," he whispered. "It can't be worse'n what I've got used to. That other was my way an' the devil's. This here is Lizy's way an' the Lord's. I'll stay."

He stayed, and he went back there a good many times during the succeeding three weeks. One night he was in tears as he came out. Two nights later he came forth laughing.

"I'm goin' home tomorrow," he said to the man who had taken him out of the saloon and been to him a good Samaritan. "Here's the money ye loaned me. I've earned it at well-drillin', and I've got more left. If I don't see ye ag'in, good-by, an' God bless ye."

"Don't forget where your strength comes from," said the man, pressing his hand.

"I sha'n't do that. So long."

He wasn't drinking any more. He wasn't spending his time with roughs and gamblers. He was going straight to his room, as he had done every night lately. He did not lie down. He sat and waited for the

—$1,000—

IN GOLD DOLLARS FREE.

CAN YOU SOLVE THIS PUZZLE?

Each one of the three lines of figures IN THE CENTRE OF THIS ADVERTISEMENT spells the name of a great city in the United States. This is a brand new puzzle and can be solved with a little study as follows: There are twenty-six letters in the alphabet, and we have used figures in spelling the cities instead of letters. Letter A is number 1, B number 2, C number 3, etc. throughout the entire alphabet. IF YOU CAN SPELL OUT THESE THREE CITIES YOU MAY SHARE IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF $1,000.0 WHICH WE ARE GIVING AWAY for getting subscriptions for us. This you can do by giving up a little of your spare time. This and other most liberal offers are made to introduce one of the very best New York magazines into every home in the United States and Canada. WE DO NOT WANT ONE CENT OF YOUR MONEY. When you have made out the names of these three cities, write them plainly on a postal card and send it to us, and you will hear from us promptly BY RETURN MAIL. It may take an entire evening to solve the three names, but STICK TO IT AND GET YOUR SHARE OF THE $1,000. A copy of our fascinating MAGAZINE WILL BE SENT FREE to every one answering this advertisement. Do not delay. Send in your answer immediately. WE INTEND TO GIVE AWAY VAST SUMS OF MONEY in the future, just as we have done in the past, to advertise our CHARMING MAGAZINE. We find it is the very best advertising we can get to give away LARGE SUMS OF GOLD FREE. Here are the names and addresses of a few people we have recently awarded FREE GOLD PRIZES: Mrs. J. M. Lachlin, Twenty-third Street, Pittsburg, Pa., $130.00; Mr. O. F. Ackerman, Hill, N. H., $125.00; Mrs. Fred Peace, 146 Atkinson Street, Rochester, N. Y., $125.00; Mr. George Corbett, Five Islands, Nova Scotia, Canada, $80.00; H. C. Hare, 40 Wisconsin Avenue, Columbus, O., $1,750.00 (this includes the $950.00 Cabinet Grand Upright Piano); W. Kettle, 2705 Carson Street, Pittsburg, Pa., $190.00; Miss Martha Gregory, 8 Park Street, Norwalk, Conn., $[illegible]; Mrs. John Just, Box 3, Enfield, N. H., $[illegible]. We could go on and point to hundreds of names of people who have gained large sums of money from our contests, but only give a few names, as we desire the space to tell you all about THIS SPECIAL $1,000.00 IN GOLD FREE OFFER. The above solution can be worked out by an alert and clever person, and the reward is so handsome that it will amply pay you to TRY AND SPELL OUT THESE THREE CITIES. Brains and energy nowadays are winning many golden prizes. Study it very carefully and let us see if you are clever and smart enough to spell out the Three Cities. WE HAVE THE $1,000.00 IN GOLD. Have you the brains and energy? If you can make out the names of the three cities, send them to us without one cent of money. Remember that this is our $1,000.00 in Gold Free Distribution, and we don't want you to send any money. When we say FREE, we mean **PERFECTLY FREE.** We would rather take this way of advertising our excellent magazine than spending many thousands of dollars in other foolish ways. We freely and cheerfully give the money away. YOU MAY WIN. We do not care who gets the money. TO PLEASE OUR READERS IS OUR DELIGHT. The question is, can you solve the above unique proposition? If you can do so, write the names of the three cities and your full address plainly in a letter and mail it to us, and you will hear from us promptly by return mail. Money is a nice thing to have, because there are so many useful uses we can put it to. By a little extra effort someone will get the money we give away. Some lazy and foolish people often neglect these grand golden free offers we make and then wonder and complain about their bad luck. There are always plenty of good opportunities for clever, brainy people who are always alert and ready to grasp a real good thing. We have built up our enormous business by being alert and liberal in our GRAND GOLD FREE DISTRIBUTIONS.

We are continually offering our readers RARE AND UNUSUAL prizes. This special contest we consider one of the greatest offers ever made. Do not delay in giving this matter your immediate attention, and if you can spell out the three cities send your answer at once. $1,000.00 REWARD will be paid to any one who can prove that in the many Free Cash Contests we have conducted in the past years we did not do exactly as we agreed. We have a big capital, and anyone can easily ascertain about our financial condition. To pay out these big gold cash prizes is a pleasure to us. We intend to have the largest circulation of our high-class one-dollar magazine in the world. In this progressive age publishers find that they must be liberal in giving away prizes of great sums of money. It is the only successful way to get your magazine talked about. For instance, if you should solve the peculiar way we have of spelling the names of the three cities, and we should hand you a sum of money as a free prize, you would never stop talking about our magazine, now, would you? We POSITIVELY CLAIM that these three lines of figures, by our plan, do actually spell the names of three cities, and that a clever, brainy person, who can think and will patiently endeavor to solve how it is done, will be amply rewarded by sharing in our $1,000.00 in Gold Free Offer. Of course, if you are easily discouraged and are not patient and are not willing to spend any time in trying to work out the solution, you certainly cannot expect to win. This advertisement was not written for drones or idlers, who are not willing to give a liberal use of their time. We expect the reader to do some work and give it the time and attention it deserves. USE YOUR BRAINS. If you are successful in solving it, well and good. Write the names of the three cities and send them to us, and we will be just as much pleased as you are. We really desire some one to be successful, and as it does not cost you one cent to solve and answer this splendid Free Money Offer, it will be very foolish for you to pass it by. In all fairness give it some of your leisure time. SUCCESS IS FOR ENERGETIC AND THOUGHTFUL PEOPLE, and the cause of FAILURE IS LACK OF INTEREST AND LAZINESS. So, dear reader, do not pass this advertisement without trying hard to make A SOLUTION OF THE THREE LINES OF FIGURES PRINTED IN THE CENTRE OF THIS ADVERTISEMENT. We suggest that you carefully read this offer several times before giving up the idea of solving the puzzle. The harder it seems the more patience and determination you should have. Courage and determination win many of the PRIZES OF LIFE. Your share in OUR FREE MONEY DISTRIBUTION depends entirely upon your own energy and brains. Don't delay a moment in TRYING TO SOLVE THIS PERPLEXING PUZZLE. Many of the people we have recently sent large sums of money to in our Free Money Distribution write us kind and grateful letters, profusely thanking us for our prompt and honest dealings, and saying that if we had not so strongly urged them to try to win they would not have been successful and would not have been the happy recipients of a large sum of money for only a few hours' effort. It always pays to give attention to our grand and liberal offers. OUR BIG CASH PRIZES have gladdened the hearts of many persons who needed the money. If you need money you will give attention to this special offer this very minute. If you solve it, write us immediately. **DON'T DELAY.**

THIS IS THE GREAT PUZZLE.

14	5	23	25	15	18	11			
23	1	19	8	9	14	7	20	15	14
3	8	9	3	1	7	15			

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THE ROBINSON PUBLISHING COMPANY,
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When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger. When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

dawn. He was so poorly off for clothing that he had no packing to do. He breakfasted early, then, as soon as a store was open, bought a suit of cheap, ready-made clothing, a clean shirt, a collar and a tie and a handkerchief, some suspenders and a pair of socks. He put on all of these new things and rolled his old ones up in a thick brown paper that the clothier gave him.

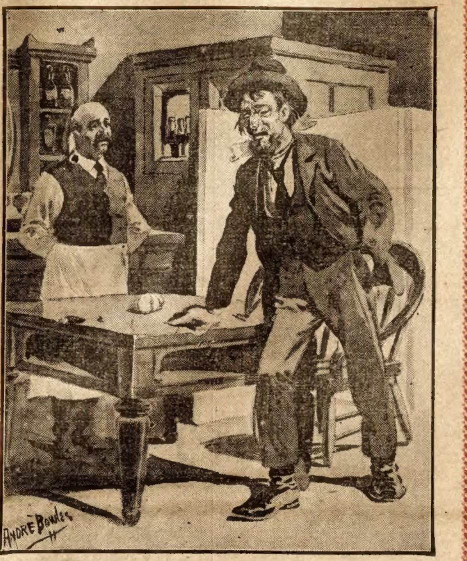
"They'll do to work in," he explained. "Thar's lots o' hard days' work in me yet. I'll show 'em all—yes, Lizy an' all of 'em."

The clothier smiled, as smiles a man who has troubles of his own and no time to talk about the troubles of others, and, with a business-like "Thank ye," held open the door for Parker to go out.

Parker paid his bill at the little hotel and then walked through the mud down to the depot. The next day at four he arrived at Dorning. A little after six he was on his way from Dorning home. Home? He had no home. But he would go back to the old place and make one.

Late in the season as it was, it was dark when he arrived at the little platform station known as Winter's Lane, across the river from the Neoga mill. A cold, drizzling rain had set in, and there was no one there. He went down Winter's Lane to the main road, down the road to the blacksmith's and then down another lane to the ferry. To the ferry? The ferry was gone.

The ferry had given place to the realization of the long-cherished dream of Lem Chilton. A floating bridge—a long, wide raft of timbers and planks—lay on the surface of the river, accessible by means of movable approaches at the extremities. It was an ingenious contrivance, of more utility than the ferry ever had been, and it coul be swung round out of danger at flood time, when the river was a highway for logs and rafts. Parker saw that it could be adjusted in a few minutes and was a practical solution of the difficulties of the place and time. As he stepped out on it he muttered:



"Sam came in whooping late in the night."

"Lem was right. I was a fool. But I was a fool about other things—so that ain't so wonderful. I don't see no lights in the old long house, but I'll go over. Gosh! What's that? Fire!"

Any man will cry "Fire!' when he sees fire, whether he sees any one near or not. It was such an involuntary alarm that Parker was sounding. And Parker had no reason for personal solicitude—it was the Neoga mill that was afire and flames were issuing from the south window of the upper floor. It was the window of the filing-room—a place that Parker would always remember.

He started to run over the bridge and made good headway until he reached the eastern incline. There he tripped over a rope that was stretched across the roadway, and fell headlong.

"Pay yer fare—two cents!" said a voice as he rose to confront a slight, lithe figure.

"Lem!" he cried. "Lem! Oh, Lord!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE BURNING MILL.

Parker ran back a rod or two onto the floating portion of the bridge and regarded the apparition before him in wild-eyed horror.

"What's the matter, Sam?" asked the voice. "Don't be scart."

"Are ye real?" asked Sam in a frightened way that made the toll-taker laugh.

"Is the bridge real?"

"Yes."

"Is the rope real?"

"Yes—darn it—it barked my shin."

"Then I'm real. Come on, but pay your fare. Two cents for foot passengers, no discount for one-legged men, an' five cents for light wagons and ten for loaded vehicles. You don't appear to be a loaded vehicle tonight, Sam."

"No, I hain't. But I thought, Lem—here's yer two coppers."

"Ye thought I was dead?"

"Yes—an' I'm glad ye ain't!"

"Are ye, Sam?" asked Lem curiously.

"Yes!" exclaimed Sam. "Yes—I am, but how about it all?"

"You know you run away an' left me under the logs. I managed to git through under the boom an' when I come up ag'in I grabbed that big iron ring in the end of it an' hung on, an' purty soon Tunker come along an' pulled me out, for I was too weak to raise myself up onto the boom. Lizy an' Tunker thought 'twouldn't be safe fer me if ye knew I was alive, an' they kept me hid till after you went off. That's all, I guess, only I ought to tell ye yer mill's afire, but it's onto Lathers, not you, for he's got sheriff's papers on it an' means to bid it in. He tried to drive me away from the bridge—wanted to gobble that, too."

Parker sat down on a box and Lem sat beside him. Lem could not have told why he no longer feared the man who had tried to kill him, but he had not the slightest fear of Parker. Perhaps there was something about Parker that proclaimed him a changed man.

"Did ye beat him?" asked Sam.

"Yes. First, the bridge don't belong to the mill plant. I built it and it's mine. When he couldn't git it he tried to put me off'n the ground here as a trespasser. The suit ag'in' me was before 'Squire Pardon, at Larnsville, an' Lathers had Lawyer Alvin an' I couldn't hire no lawyers, but Professor Gaylord helped me. He showed that Lathers had no title to the mill property an' that p'int settled the trespass question. Then we went before the Board o' County Commissioners an' Professor Gaylord explained matters to 'em an' they declared this lane open as a public highway an' took the bridge in charge, payin' me to run it. As soon as it pays fer itself it'll be made free—then I'll be out of a job, but Lathers won't be any better off. Professor Gaylord made Lathers mad, of course, an' Lathers tried to git even by buyin' an' old claim ag'inst the Professor an' tryin' to sell his house out on it. The people all sided with me an' Gaylord an' wouldn't bid on his things. So thar was no sale an' I helped the teacher fix it all up. Then Lathers got Lord Rustler to slight Gaylord socially, an' Gaylord's reorganizin' the town aristocracy an' leavin' the Latherses an' Rustlers out in the cold. I'm goin' to Gaylord's school for edication an' polish. You didn't edicate me much, Sam, an' ye did all yer polishin' of me with a shingle."

"I didn't do right by ye, that's so, Lem, but I've come home to make everything as near right as I can."

"Home? Ye ain't got no home. It's all broke up!" cried Lem. "Didn't ye know?"

"No. Whar's Lizy?"

"Gone to Ohio to her brother—the one that's an apple-tree agent—went more'n a month ago."

"Didn't she leave any word fer me?" asked Parker brokenly. "Didn't she, Lem?" he asked again, wistfully.

"She said ye could communicate with her if ye ever should redeem yerself, Sam. But she won't stan' no foolin', as I said to Tunker."

"Tunker? I don't see no lights in the long house. Where does Tunker live, Sam?"

"In Ohio, too, at Morgan's Corners. That's where Lizy is. That's where Bennie is buried."

"Where Lizy is an' where Bennie is buried," repeated Parker, tears coursing down his face. "That's where I ought to be."

"Remember what Lizy said about the redeemin' b's'ness, Sam, an' don't go thar an' git the worst of it. I can tell ye Lizy ain't goin' to be easy on ye an' ye don't deserve it."

"Part o' the redeemin' work has been done, Lem—up thar!" Parker pointed a long, calloused, knotted finger aloft. "God knows I've repented. God has forgiven. Lizy'll find out I've repented, then she'll forgive. How comes Tunker to be livin' at Morgan's Corners?"

"I sent him out there to look out for my interests," said Lem in a matter-of-fact way.

"What interests?"

"I own a mill at Morgan's Corners, an' a hull lot o' land in a valley beyond there—a lot o' kind o' wild land, and' thar's reports

LUCKY "7" PUZZLE

$1000 TO OUR LUCKY READERS FREE!

In the square below are a lot of figure 7s. They are all jumbled up and mixed together so that they are hard to count. The idea of the puzzle is to count the number of figures in the square. Every reader of this paper has a chance to win a prize. We know that very few persons will count the exact number, but we not only give prizes to the person who counts correctly but also to 1244 other persons who come nearest to the correct number. With this number of chances every person who answers this offer has a chance to get a prize. The person who counts the exact number of figures in the square gets $200, the person who comes the nearest gets $100, the next $50, the next $20, the next $10, and the next 1240 persons in the contest get presents, the average value of those presents is 50 cents each.

In case two or more persons are tied for one prize then the prize is equally divided. There is no guess work in this puzzle. It is simply a test of your ability to count figures correctly. Every figure is shown plainly but the figures are mixed up so that it takes a lot of patience and care in order to count them correctly. This contest closes Thursday evening, December 31st, at 5 p. m., and no answers sent after that time will be counted.

The publishers of WOMAN'S WORLD have a paid capital of $1,000,000. We own our own paper mill, printing plant, and twelve-story office building. We always do exactly as we agree, and in dealing with us you are dealing with one of the largest and oldest publishing houses in Chicago.

The Lucky "7" puzzle is to advertise the WOMAN'S WORLD which already has a circulation of over 800,000 copies each month. The subscription price is only 25 cents a year. The magazine is printed on book paper, profusely illustrated in colors. It has a lot of information and departments, dramatic news, household hints puzzles, fashions, young folks' departments and splendid stories by prominent writers. We want to reach the million mark as soon as possible, and the low subscription price of 25 cents a year is an inducement that makes it possible for everyone to subscribe and get the best monthly in the world for the price.

HOW MANY FIGURES IN THIS SQUARE ?

Every one entering this contest must send in 25 cents for a year's subscription, which entitles you to register one count in the contest. Or if you send 50 cents you will get four year's subscription to the WOMAN'S WORLD and be entitled to four counts. If you are already a subscriber you may enter the contest just the same, and your new subscription will be added to your present subscription. You can also get your friends to subscribe and increase your number of chances to win prizes.

By next nearest we mean the next nearest above or below the correct number. In case one person should send in a count of one more than actually correct and another sent in a count of one less than actually correct they would tie for the prize of next nearest, and so on with the next nearest. A tie for the prize means the prize will be divided equally among those who are tied for the prize.

The counts must be filled in on the blanks below. Write your count plainly, also your name and address. Send in your count as soon as you have made it. You may send in as many as you pay for according to the offer.

CONDITIONS.—Each person must count the number of 7s in this square and fill in the count in the proper space. For example, you will fill in "1st count 726," and if you send in four counts fill in the other spaces in the blank. No person employed by the WOMAN'S WORLD, or any resident of the city of Chicago is allowed to compete for the prizes. No one knows the number of 7s in the square. The count will not be made until after the first of January, 1904, when the figures will be counted by a committee and the correct answer will be given. Then all the counts sent in by subscribers will be compared and the prizes awarded. The paper and receipt will be sent as soon as possible. Remember that it takes some time to properly enter subscriptions, and to take care of the large mail we receive daily, so if you do not hear from us at once do not be alarmed. No counts will be changed after they are received by us. Remit by Post-office or Express order, or registered letter. Counts must be in our office before 5 p. m., December 31st, 1903. If you send 25 cents write your count in the first space. If you send 50 cents write a count in each of the four spaces. Twenty-five cents entitles you to one year's subscription and one count; 50 cents entitles you to four years' subscription and four counts. If you are already a subscriber your subscription will be extended. The subscription blank is made so that you can answer either for one or four counts. Cross out the word "four" if you send one count, or cross out the word "one" if you send four counts. Extra blanks will be furnished free upon request. Remember we are a responsible concern and that the prizes will be faithfully awarded; also remember there is no guess work about the matter. It is simply a test of patience and correctness.

HERE ARE THE PRIZES:

Each person answering this contest must fill in the blank below and state the number of figures in the square.

1	Prize for correct answer	$200
1	Prize for nearest correct answer	100
1	Prize next nearest	50
1	Prize next nearest	20
1	Prize next nearest	10
1240	Prizes of presents average value each 50 cts.	620
1245	Prizes amounting to	$1000

In case two or more persons send the same count and are entitled to a prize then the amount of the prize is divided equally.

Fill Out This Subscription and Count Blank.

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Enclosed find 25 cents 50 cents for one four year's subscription to WOMAN'S WORLD, which entitles me to one count four counts in your Lucky "7" Puzzle contest. I register my one count four counts in the blank below.

Yours truly,

Name............

Street, P. O., or Rural Route............

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State............

1st Count.	2nd Count.	3rd Count.	4th Count.

NOTE.—Simply write in your count in figures.

Address WOMAN'S WORLD, Boyce Bldg., Chicago.

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Gonorrhœa, Gleet, Lost Manhood, Bladder and Prostate Troubles and general debility of men positively cured by **SKEEN'S PAINLESS STRICTURE CURE.** It eradicates every trace of these ailments, in the shortest possible time, and makes you as sound as when a boy. Thousands of men are strictured, more or less, but do not know it. Remove the stricture and you will get well. It will pay you to investigate this greatest and best of all cures. Send for our free booklet and testimonials of prominent men and write them. All correspondence confidential.

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Suffer No Longer, But Send Your Name and Address Today, as This Grand Offer May Never Appear Again. It Has Saved Thousands of Weak Men Who Thought Their Cases Were Hopeless.

Free One Week's Trial Package of This Wonderful Remedy Which Rebuilds the Structure of Youth and Gives You Back the Vitality You Have Lost. Send No Money, Simply Your Name and Address.

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that thar's oil on it, but I don't know about that yet. This property an' some more was bein' kept from me for years by that man Sim Bowers that traveled with the circus—the feller you was in with. Ye ought 'o 've known I'd be a squarer friend to ye than he could be, Sam."

Parker was shame-faced and silent.

"It was the schoolteacher—Professor Gaylord—that managed this business for me, too, an' he did it right. If I ever strike a lake o' oil out there, he's goin' to have a right to bore a hole in the bottom of it if he wants to. Cling to them that clings to you—ain't that right?"

"Right enough, I reckon," replied Parker, looking at the blazing mill. "I s'pose," he went on, "you don't feel any more like clingin' to me than Lizy does, do ye, Lem?"

"Well, did ye cling to me?" asked the boy sternly. "No—ye unlocked my fingers from the boom when I was tryin' to save my life that you wanted to destroy. Ain't that so?"

"Don't—don't talk about that, Lem. The Lord has forgiven me even that. Can't you do it?"

"Not yet, Sam. I feel like Lizy about this matter. Ye'll have to redeem yerself clear out an' complete. The chance may come."

"I hope it will," replied Parker. "See! There's folks comin' to the fire! Let's go down by the mill an' see it."

"No, I've a good reason to stay here, though I generally go by this time. A lot o' people'll want to cross the bridge to the mill tonight, an' they may as well pay for it. You've got a good reason not to show up here tonight, Sam. Go up to my room in the long house an' crawl into bed an' stay."

"What for?"

"Some folks might think ye'd come back an' set the mill afire. I know ye didn't—'twas Brand. Brand's been roostin' there drunk most of the time for three weeks. They're ready to think ill o' ye, Sam, with cause or without it. Ye know you're a dead duck here."

"I'll foller yer advice, Lem," said Parker, "an' I'll yet make 'em think better o' me."

Sam found, at the Neoga mill and at Larnsville, the bitterness that is universally poured out on the man who is down. The respectable element would have none of him because he had failed. The drinking element had no use for him now that he was leaving whisky alone and trying to build himself up. Even Rip Hinsey, soak and reprobate as he was, insulted Parker at church one Sunday morning by giving a loudly-grunted expression of his opinion that the struggling man was "a measly hypocrite." Others who did not express such an opinion in so swinish a way looked it. Lathers several times remarked in his hearing that some men never got religion enough to be honest—Lathers, who had done all he could to impoverish him—and Rustler slammed the door in his face.

Parker, gladly certain that his crowning sin was not known to any one there except Lem, in whom he had the utmost confidence, bore his trials with what humility he might, and worked at whatever his hands found to do to put honest money in his purse against the day when he might want to take it to Lizy where his Bennie was buried.

Not even Lem's evident good will helped Parker greatly. The ill-timed appearance of the county history, containing his portrait and a biographical sketch representing him as one of the "coming" men, brought down upon his head incisive ridicule.

CHAPTER XXXII.

PARKER MAKES GOOD—THE END.

As for Lem Shelton, his position in the village was assured, but he had no intention of remaining long there. Professor Gaylord, who had gone out to Ohio to look the boy's property over, had, on his return, caused the publication of articles in the "Hot Blast" that had given Lem great prominence in the community. By playing Lem against his enemies, the Lathers and Rustlers, Gaylord had put those two families down in the social scale until, under his democratic reign as the Ward McAllister of the village, they were about the only people not recognized in society.

Thus, one morning, Mrs. Rustler and Mrs. Lathers awoke to the knowledge that, the previous night, Larnsville had had a grand ball at which they had not been present and to which they had not been invited. The two women—Mrs. Rustler plump and pretty and becomingly gowned—Mrs. Lathers lanky, angular and ill-favored and dressed in frightful taste—met in front of the postoffice, about 10 o'clock.

"You dear thing!" gurgled Mrs. Lathers.

"Really, I beg your pardon?" replied Mrs. Rustler in chilling interrogation.

"So glad to see you, my love," Mrs. Lathers persisted affably. "Larnsville society seems to be degenerating."

"I think so. I believe you attended the ball last night—you and Mr. Lathers," answered Mrs. Rustler, smiling dangerously.

"No," answered Mrs. Lathers, flushing.

"Not invited even to such a mob as that? Well, you and Mr. Lathers must be getting hideously unpopular."

"I guess so. Say, Mrs. Rustler, were you and Mr. Rustler invited?"

"I should say not. Mr. Rustler personally served notice on Gaylord's committee that no invitation would be considered by us."

"Is that so?"

"Certainly."

"I didn't understand it that way," persisted Mrs. Lathers dryly. "Larnsville has no society now, Mrs. Rustler—none at all."

"Oh, yes, it has. The real exclusive society of Larnsville consists of two persons—Mr. Rustler and myself."

"The Rustlers and the Latherses might head a little select set," suggested Mrs. Lathers.

"If the Latherses—nice name—are not considered fit to associate with that rabble of Gaylord's, what claims for social consideration can they possibly have on the Rustlers?"

"You spiteful old thing!" cried Mrs. Lathers, raising a bony and skinny hand, doubled claw-like, toward her tormentor's pretty face.

"Don't you dare! You brutal squtterheels!"

"Squtterheels?" cried Mrs. Lathers. "What do you mean by that?"

"You have a dictionary in the house, I suppose, Mrs. Lathers—funny name—and you open it sometimes when you have autumn leaves to press or want to hide a dollar away from Mr. Lathers—a barbarous name, truly—don't you, dear?"

"Don't you get familiar with me!" yelled Mrs. Lathers.

"Oh, that's the last thing I want to do," replied Mrs. Rustler sweetly. "Really, I don't suppose you know much about the dictionary, but in your younger days you had a good chance to learn the cook-book by heart. So-long, dear! Mr. Rustler and I are going on a tour through the West. Don't you wish Mr. Lathers—makes me

(Continued on page eleven.)

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The great **India** nerve, brain and **Sexual** tablet, restores **health** and **vigor** to men and women. It is the only guaranteed cure for **nervous debility, sleeplessness, impotency** and all diseases of the **Sexual Organs.** Thousands of weak-nerved men and women have been cured by these **tablets**, the prescription of which was procured by the Doctor while traveling in India, from the physician then attending the royal family and who carefully guarded the secret. The ingredients are imported to this country and we will send you 30 days' trial treatment, postpaid, by mail, in plain wrapper for $1.00. Tobacco users relief.

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My new and wonderful Philippine Restorative, well named VITALA, disproves all the old notions about lost manhood. The spark may be dimmed, but it never dies out entirely. I have confounded the medical world by a private home treatment that is absolutely sure and guaranteed to restore superb manhood, stop all unnatural weakening drains, and give full strength, manly size and vigor to the wasted and weakened parts. Thus far this remarkable formula has not once failed me, and I stake my professional renown that it positively cures sexual weakness at all ages and stages of the malady, quickly and forever. Do not fear or hesitate to send for this Free Trial. No matter what was the original cause of your weakness, whether from injury, sickness, early indiscretions, excesses, mental worry or physical overexhaustion, this remedy will redeem the worst cases, and bring back your health.

VITALA is without a doubt the most potent and powerful specific the world has ever known for sexual failure; purely vegetable and harmless it stands to-day the only recognized cure for weak men where the advanced stage of epilepsy, paralysis, consumption or insanity has not been actually reached. I fully believe in the glory of a manly man, and want every sad sufferer to reap the benefit of my discovery. Whoever may read these lines is welcome. A simple letter addressed to **Doctor Na Morg, Lock Box 654, Jackson, Mich.**, will bring the treatment to you free by return mail. There are no C. O. D. charges to pay now or ever, and no marks or advertisement on the plain sealed cover

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Send Your Application At Once To The Physician's Institute.

They Will Send You Absolutely Free One of Their 100 Guage Supreme Electric Belts, the Belt Which Has Made so Many Wonderful Cures—You Needn't Send Even a Postage Stamp, Just Your Name and Address.

Seven years ago the State of Illinois granted to the Physicians' Institute of Chicago a charter.

There was need of something above the ordinary method of treatment for chronic diseases, something more than any one specialist or any number of specialists acting independently could do, so the State itself, under the powers granted it by its general laws, gave the power to the Physicians' Institute to furnish to the sick such help as would make them well and strong.

Ever since its establishment this Institute has endeavored in every possible way to carry out the original purposes of its establishment under the beneficient laws of the State.

Three years ago, the Physicians' Institute, realizing the value of electricity in the treatment of certain phases of disease, created under the superintendence of its staff of specialists an electric belt, and this belt has been proved to be of great value as a curative agent. From time to time it has been improved until it reached that stage of perfection which warranted its present name of "Supreme."

This belt is the most effective of all agents in the cure of rheumatism, lumbago, lame back, nervous exhaustion, weakened or lost vital functions, varicocele, kidney disorders and many other complaints.

This "Supreme Electric Belt" is made in one grade only—100 guage—there is no better electric belt made and no better belt can be made. Whenever in the opinion of our staff of specialists the wonderful curative and revitalizing forces of electricity will cure you we send you, free of all cost, one of these Supreme Electric Belts. It is not sent on trial, it is yours to keep forever without the payment of one cent. This generous offer may be withdrawn at any time, so you should write to-day for this free "Supreme Electric Belt" to the Physicians' Institute at 200 Unity Building, Chicago, Ills.

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Are there any sure signs of love?

Certainly.

Will she stand for your society seven evenings in the week?

Would she rather sit in the back parlor and talk to you than go to the theater with another man?

Does she yearn to hear the story of when you were a little boy and lived on the old farm, and had pale green freckles and warts?

Does she criticise your neckties and manifest a desire to buy you one herself?

Is she interested in your soul, and has she given you a nice red Bible?

Is she afraid of your ruining your health by overwork, and does she beg you to put on dry shoes when you get home, if you happen to call on her of a rainy night?

These are the unmistakable signs of the tender passion in woman, and by these tokens may a man know that he is IT.

Speed of Birds.

Frequently arguments arise as to the speed with which wild birds fly, and many men of science have sought to determine something about it. Naturally it is impossible to fix the record made by such birds as grouse, quail or snipe when they first arise, but it is safe to say that they are not going one-half as fast as the luckless gunner who misses them imagines. With the migratory fowl of known fast flight, such as ducks and geese, something more nearly accurate is known.

The green-winged teel is about the speediest of them all. It does something like 90 miles an hour as readily as a sparrow dives into an inviting rainspout. The canvasback is only a trifle slower, probably 85 miles being its limit, while the black duck, mallard and red-head fall below this, being timed at about 80 miles. Still this is plenty fast enough to insure lots of misses unless the fellow with the gun looks down the rib straight and pulls the trigger at the right time.

Couldn't See the Improvement.

Mr. Herlihy looked at his latest photograph, and his gaze bespoke disappointment. "Oi'd never 'a' had this tuk if it hadn't been for thim children telling me about the improvements in photographing," he muttered. "Improvements, is it? Oi'd loike to show this pictur' soide be solde wid the wan Oi had twinty years ago. There's an old, anxious, toired-out look to this new wan that was niver in the other. There may be improvements in photographing," said Mr. Herlihy, as he deposited the card face down in his table drawer, "but Oi've yet to see thim."

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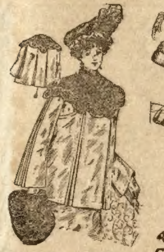
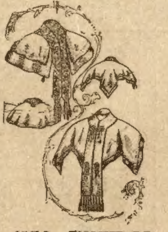
The patterns shown below are furnished us by one of the best, if not the best, pattern manufacturers in New York. They comprise the very latest styles, and are unequalled for accuracy in fit, simplicity in use, and are most economical of material. They sell from the stores from twenty-five to fifty cents each. Full instructions are printed on every pattern. Three months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 25 cents and any TWO of these patterns FREE. Six months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 50 cents and FIVE of these patterns FREE. This offer is without equal. If you are wise you will take advantage of it at once.

REMEMBER, to avoid mistakes, you must first give the number of the Pattern wanted—second, do not fail to give bust measure for waist, or waist measure if skirt is desired. Unless you do as here stated we will not know what to send you. Also, do not fail to enclose money. **PATTERN DEPT., CHICAGO LEDGER, CHICAGO, ILL.**



4554 COAT WITH CAPE COLLAR 32-40 BUST



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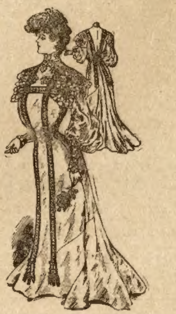

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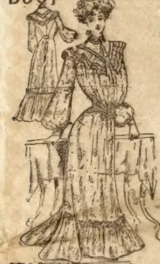

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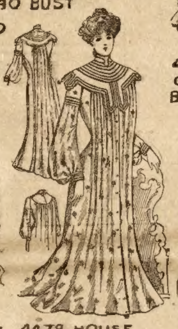

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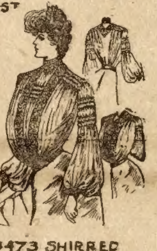

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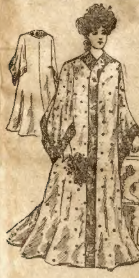

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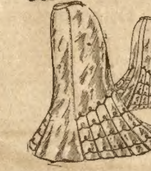

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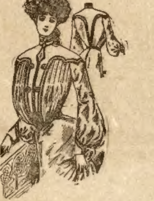

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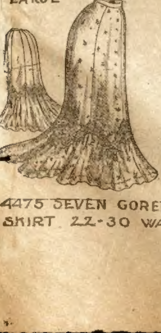

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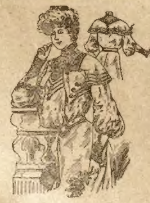
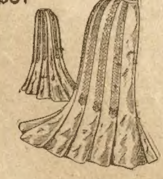


4550 BLOUSE WAIST 32-40 BUST



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CURE YOURSELF
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IT NEVER FAILS
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LET ME BE YOUR FRIEND

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You can see I have been through the mill.

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Weak manhood causes more misery than all diseases known, but it can be cured, and I have the remedy. I will send you the prescription and full directions FREE—it will cost you nothing to try it. It is a specific for Lost Manhood, Nervous Weakness, Varicocele, No Ambition. It gives youthful warmth and vigor, strengthens the vital organs, and builds up run-down or abused conditions of the nervous system. Why suffer in silence? It will put sunshine in your soul, and add golden years to your life. I have cured doctors and friends, and I know it will do the work. I send the Prescription and full directions in plain sealed envelope, free; all I ask is that you use it, and if you will, pass it along to your fellow man. This advertising helps my Washing Machine business a little, but, if by placing this cure in the hands of my suffering brethren, I can restore you new life, new joy and happiness, I will feel myself repaid for the effort. Do not delay until the last ray of hope is gone—enjoy life while you live. Write today in confidence.

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This paper is authorized to say that if any middle-aged or old man who does not feel himself as capable today as when he was in his twenties, or any young man who is not as perfect as he knows he ought to be, will write in confidence to the Von Mohl Co., of Cincinnati, they will be glad to send each man who writes them a full 5 days' trial treatment of "Calthos," the great remedy for weak and nervous men, discovered by that celebrated French scientist, Prof. Jules Laborde. This is the very remedy that has cured so many thousands of men of all ages, who through errors in youth, excesses in later life and still other causes, had become weaklings of the most embarrassing kind. It instantly restored to them this power which they had lost and gave them back again the vigor, confidence and ambition of younger days, and all privately in their own home. It is the only remedy of its kind sanctioned by the French and German armies, and the Von Mohl Co. has the sole distributing rights for America.

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You may think you have tried your level best to be cured, you may have spent money on this thing and that without good results, but until you send for the free trial treatment of Calthos and see for yourself what wonderful good it does you, you cannot say with a clear conscience that you have done your full duty to yourself. Calthos has permanently cured thousands who have tried "everything else." It will cure you if only you will be thoughtful enough to send for it. Do so today sure and they will send you free, besides the 5 days' trial treatment, many interesting illustrated books on the subject, all in plain wrapper, and sealed against inspection. Do not hesitate to write, as they are only too glad to do this for any suffering man and you should not rest content until you find out by actual trial if Calthos can cure you. Write today in full confidence.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

THE LITTLE WHITE CAT.

There's a little white cat that lives in our house,
And he watches the birds at play;
And he said to himself, with a little cat grin,
"I'm going to catch one some fine day."
The birds flew in and out of the trees,
And they sang as they flew about,
"Tweet, tweet, don't go near, he's a bad little cat,
You'll get caught if you don't look out."

Now one fine day that little white cat
Sat and looked at the birds in the tree;
And a little brown bird hopped out on a branch—
The cat gave a spring. Dear me, dear me,
Alas! and alas! the cat had him fast,
And he laughed to himself with glee;
"You see if you watch, and always look out,
You can catch any bird," said he.

How to Make a Bottle Cannon.

Would you like to imitate at the table the explosion of a cannon? Take a thick empty bottle (a champagne quart is best) and fill it one-third full of water. Get a seidlitz powder and in this water dissolve a quantity of bicarbonate of soda, which is contained in the little blue packet; place the contents of the other packet (the white one), tartaric acid, in a playing card rolled up into a tube and tied around with thread, sealed at the bottom with a couple of pellets of blotting paper. Suspend this cartridge from the cork of the bottle by a suitable length of thread attached to a tack, so that it will be about one inch above the water, the open end of the cartridge being, of course, on top or rather pointing upward. Now insert the cartridge into the bottle and place the cork in firmly, and you are ready for the explosion.

In order to explode your novel field piece lay the bottle horizontally on two pencils parallel upon the table, representing, as it were, the gun carriage. Presently the water penetrates the cartridge tube through the blotting paper, dissolves the tartaric acid and, the carbonic gas thus suddenly set free, the cork flies out with a loud pop, carrying the now empty cartridge with it like a rocket, while through the recoil the bottle will roll back fully six or eight inches.

Little darling Ling-a-Ling
Was a very precious thing—
Her coos were like the doves in spring,
She gurgled like a brook.
Two angels lived within her eyes
(They used to live up in the skies).
And every time her lids would rise
You'd see them kind of look!

Then Something Happened.

The Elder Lady—Oh, isn't Mr. Gayboy coming this evening, Alice?

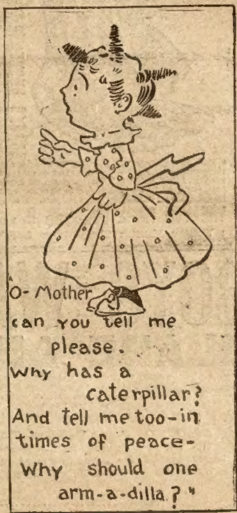
The Younger Lady—No, ma. He's out of town on very pressing business today.

The Boy—Well, I'll bet he ain't doing any more pressing business than he was last night, ma, when sister Allie was on his lap in the parlor, and—"

No Cause for It.

Theresa (aged 6)—Our family is awfully exclusive. Is yours?

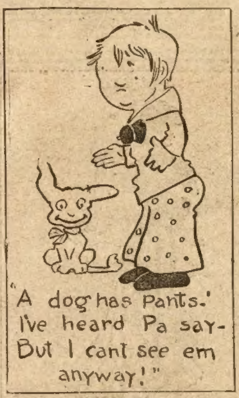
Floramy (aged 5)—No, indeed! We haven't anything to be ashamed of.



The Dreadfulness of Boys.

Much of the dreadfulness of boys from 6 to 16 is due to the fact that in so very few homes a boy can be natural without disturbing everything and everybody. But who ever thinks of providing a place for the boys in which to keep their treasures undisturbed, where they can make all the noise they like? If a man needs a den to relax in, and every one seems to grant that he does, how much more does a growing boy! Is it not dreadful to think of a live boy in an elaborately furnished room, and all the other members of the family nagging him to keep still?

If mothers would give anything like the amount of study and pains to their boys and the conditions which will bring the best results, that those do who succeed with house plants, we might have growing boys instead of what we most often see, boys hard and indifferent to every one.


"A dog has Pants.'
I've heard Pa say-
But I cant see em
anyway!"

A FROWN AND A SMILE.

Such a silly little, foolish little, naughty little frown—
Too small to do the slightest harm, you'd think;
Yet the naughty little frown frowned the nursery pleasure down
And made a pleasant room as black as ink.

Nurse scolded; Jamie sighed;
Kitten ran and baby cried.
(You scarcely can believe it, but it's true.)
Every smile was blotted out
With that naughty frown about,
Just think how much a little frown can do!

Such a pleasant little, happy little, jolly little smile—
Too small to do the slightest good, you'd say;
Yet that happy little smile kept the nursery all the while
As cheerful as the sunshine and as gay.
Nurse was singing like a bird;
Baby cooed and kitten purred.
(You scarcely can believe it, but it's true.)
Everywhere that small smile went
It brought pleasure and content,
Just think how much a little smile can do!

The Smallest Soldier.

An American boy accustomed to the unusual freedom enjoyed here would think some of the laws of other countries very hard to obey. The military laws, which are so strictly carried out, sometimes give special hardships. In some countries of Europe every abled-bodied young man must serve a certain length of time in the army. The names of all old enough to serve are placed upon a list and each one is duly notified by the proper authorities to appear for duty.

One young man about three feet in height and of proportionate weight was notified in the usual way. He was not excused from service until the officer in charge found that he could not keep step with his comrades nor carry the regimental flag. He was the smallest soldier in Europe, perhaps in the world.

Thought He Was Baby.

Towne—Popley's baby is old enough now to sit up and take table food.

Browne—How do you know?

Towne—I sat next to him in the restaurant today and when he got his plate of cold corned beef he absent-mindedly cut up some of it in small bits and passed it over to me.

Seems Plausible.

She—I wonder why a little apple caused Adam's downfall?

He—Oh, probably because the banana peel hadn't been discovered then.

Teacher—What is a cannibal?

Bobbie—Please, sir, a cannibal is one who eats each other.

I CURE FITS

When I say I cure I do not mean merely to stop them for a time and then have them return again. I mean a radical cure. I have made the disease of FITS, EPILEPSY or FALLING SICKNESS a life-long study. I warrant my remedy to cure the worst cases. Because others have failed is no reason for not now receiving a cure. Send at once for a treatise and a Free Bottle of my infallible remedy. Give Express and Post Office.
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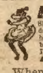

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